

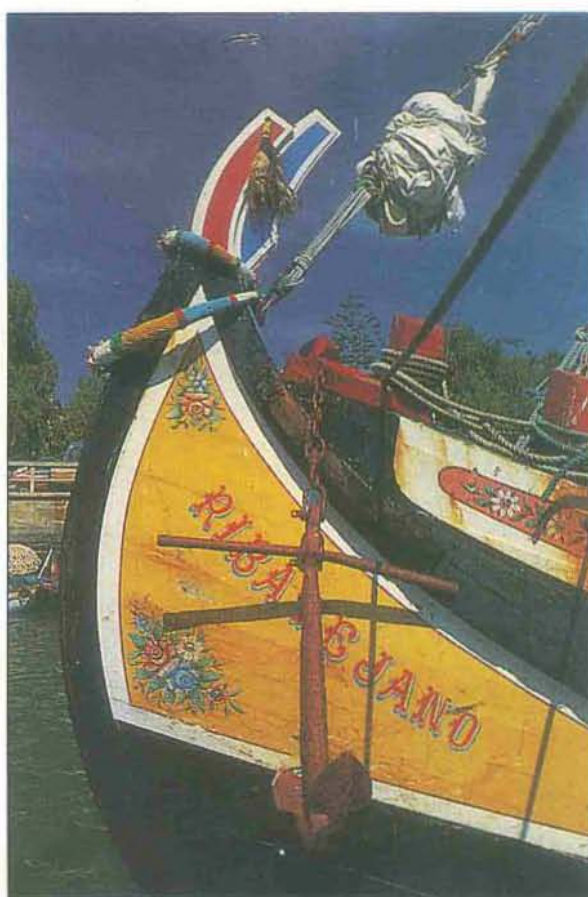
No. 19

January 1998

# SAMUDRA

## REPORT

INTERNATIONAL COLLECTIVE IN SUPPORT OF FISHWORKERS



ARTISANAL FISHERIES IN CHILE  
SOUTH AFRICA'S WHITE PAPER  
RESPONSIBLE FISHERIES IN BRAZIL  
WORLD FORUM OF FISH HARVESTERS AND FISHWORKERS  
FISHERIES MANAGEMENT IN CATALUNYA  
A LIVELIHOOD FROM FISHING  
PHILIPPINES' APO ISLAND  
INTERNET WORKSHOP  
DEBATE ON MSC  
NEWS ROUND-UP

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## Comment

# A new forum and new hopes

For the world's fisheries, the last quadrennium has been strewn with several milestones of far-reaching significance. The historic United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was ratified in 1994. The United Nations Agreement on the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks was opened for signature in 1995. Also in the same year, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was adopted by the FAO Conference. And now, from a totally different initiative comes the formation of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers (WFF) in New Delhi in November 1997. The Forum represents those who are directly engaged in fishing, processing, sale and transportation of fish in the subsistence/artisanal/aboriginal/traditional sectors. It, however, excludes merchants, large corporations and their affiliates as well as industrial aquaculture operators.

The Forum's principal objective is to protect, defend and strengthen the communities that depend on fisheries resources for their livelihood. It thus seeks to improve their quality of life. Towards this end, it has an action plan to better protect fisheries resources from both land-based and sea-based threats like pollution, tourism and industrial aquaculture as well as overfishing arising from the use of non-selective methods and practices.

The Forum promotes sustainable fishing as well as the conservation and regeneration of fisheries resources, and greater protection of all aquatic ecosystems. It advocates a rights-based fisheries in waters under national jurisdiction and a central role for fishworker organizations in fisheries management worldwide. It stands for greater compliance with relevant international agreements in fisheries and advocates tough measures against fleet migration from the North to the South. It takes both an educational as well as a proactive role. It wants fishworkers to be better organized and vigilant.

The formation of the World Forum is, in a sense, the consummation of a process that started with the International Conference of Fishworkers and their Supporters in Rome in 1964, when fish-workers, mainly from the developing countries, emphasized the importance of building up national organizations before attempting an international organization. The Forum fills a major vacuum at the international level for artisanal and small-scale fishworkers. So far, the interests of these fishworkers had to be defended by support groups like ICSF.

The Forum has the potential to give the artisanal and small-scale sector the most significant producers of food from the sea a major say in international decision-making processes in fisheries development and management. It is particularly welcome at a time when several governments are critically reviewing their national fisheries policies which once favoured the industrial fisheries sector.

In an age when fisheries resources are getting increasingly globalized due to active market forces and unequal potential of different fishing grounds, only an initiative like this that links fishworkers across continents can succeed in stopping certain destructive tendencies in fisheries development and trade. The Forum's interest in ensuring compliance with relevant international agreements could go a long way in enlisting the support of fishworkers' organizations worldwide towards the implementation of such agreements. This would be particularly useful in the case of FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

At a time when fisheries management is moving more towards a regional, rather than a national approach, an organization like the World Forum could significantly influence developments in the future. Moreover, now that the ecosystem approach and individual transferable quotas are being increasingly mooted as panaceas for all ills plaguing fisheries management, an initiative like the World Forum, that juxtaposes principles of sustainability with social concerns, will help maintain focus on issues of life and livelihood of fishworkers, along with conservation of fish and fish habitats. We wish this initiative all success and hope that, on the eve of the 21st Century, it becomes a significant voice in matters related to fisheries management and development.

# Pushed into a corner

**Some of the crucial issues facing the artisanal fishing sector in Chile were discussed at the recent CONAPACH Congress**

The 15th National Congress of Chilean Artisanal Fishermen, organized by CONAPACH, took place in Talcahuano, in the south of Chile, in November 1996. This Congress discussed developments over the previous two years since the launch of a national programme of action.

The Congress represents a unique and traditional meeting space for fisher organizations in Chile and allows policies to be decided for the following year. The meeting is an indication that the process of organization and social cohesion is still very important for the development, not just of those directly involved in the sector, but of the nation as a whole.

There are now 60,000 people involved in the artisanal fishing sector in Chile, with total catches rising to 811,000 tonnes in 1995. The state of the resource is still a concern and there are many challenges to be faced. CONAPACH exists to develop the artisanal sector in Chile and to strengthen the level of organization within this sector of the national fishing industry. The role of the State and organizations has been expressed in the evolution of a specific artisanal fishing policy which guides the development of the sector.

The opening address of the Congress pointed out one of the most salient issues in discussing artisanal fishing in the Latin American context: neoliberalism and its impact. It is felt, in Chile at least, that neoliberal (or monetarist) policies have forced artisanal fishing into a corner by requisitioning use rights that have traditionally resided with the artisanal community. ITQs (Individual Transferable Quotas) are seen as a product of these neoliberal economic policies. Artisanal fishing existed in Chile long before the Spanish arrived in the 16th Century, and

Don Hugo Arancibia Zamorano, and the then National President of CONAPACH, giving the opening address at the Congress, expressed a desire to see it continue to exist into the 21st Century.

In 1994, CONAPACH had launched an extensive national action programme which had four main pillars: (i) organization as a prerequisite for development; (ii) unity as a central element of any progress; (iii) the need for a development policy for the artisanal sector; and (iv) the need to decentralize CONAPACH. In an attempt to demonstrate that this action programme was being put into practice in a real and evident way, the 15th Congress was held in the south of Chile, rather than in the capital.

The basic document for the development policy for the artisanal sector was signed in the presence of the President of the Republic in August 1995. This was a historic moment, as it was the first time that representatives of the State and the artisanal sector got a recognized agreement and a set of guidelines for the process of development based on other political and technical points of view. The fundamental part of the development policy aimed at improving the conditions of the communities and the fishermen, through policies concerning the arrangement for artisanal fishing and the strengthening of fishing institutions.

**Framework in place**

Although the document had no immediate discernible effect, the framework is in place (such as the revised 1991 Fisheries Law) for progress to be made. One of the most crucial elements of the new relationship between the State and the artisanal sector is the establishment of the artisanal fishing zone that extends for five miles offshore.

However, because the State views economic interaction between the industrial and artisanal sectors in this area as the norm rather than the exception, CONAPACH is still striving to plug the 'holes' in the five-mile exclusion zone.

**A**s a reflection of the decentralization of CONAPACH, it was stated that there needed to be consultations with the three macro-zones in the country (representing the north, the centre and the south—three very different geographic and climatic zones) to ensure that this was the stated objective of all the regional institutions.

The programme of action initiated in 1995 had also stated the need to increase artisanal fisheries' representation in the Fisheries Council which informs and comments upon government policy. Although a development fund was established under the 1991 Fisheries Law, because it is currently funded by fines and only an inadequate State contribution, it is unable to respond to the sector's needs. As a regulatory mechanism, the 1991 Fisheries Law has seen a decrease in the number of violations, but the number of cases reaching court is still too low, and there are insufficient facilities for inspection.

A relationship with the Ministry of Public Works was written into the development policy with regard to modernizing harbour infrastructure in bays and inlets. This involves a programme of investment and the development of inland transport. The hope is that this relationship will help prevent traditional artisanal harbours being developed for the benefit of tourism or industrial fishing. It is strongly felt by CONAPACH that bays and inlets used by artisanal fishermen are not just geographic features, but also form the roots of communities and represent complex economic, social, cultural and political spaces. In order to drive this idea to the forefront of government policy, CONAPACH has participated in the formation of the national coastal zone management policy.

Whether or not artisanal fishermen should become micro-enterprises is a key question in the sector at the moment and

derives from the concerns about neoliberal economic policies. This issue has also arisen because of the difficulty that fishermen have in gaining access to finance from public and private banks. CONAPACH argues that artisanal fishermen can develop adequate marketing strategies by maintaining a solid union between the organizations, and that there is no need for them to abandon this traditional structure.

The 'development policy' element of the action programme focused on enabling local organizations to improve their level of participation. CONAPACH has encouraged the creation of Regional Committees for Fisheries Development, which are official counterparts to articulate specific policies to the State. There are currently seven such committees in Chile. There were several workshops held at the Congress dealing with various aspects of artisanal fishing. The recommendations and conclusions of these workshops (all of which follow from the above discussion) are detailed below.

With regard to the five-mile exclusion zone, CONAPACH declared that it will never allow industrial activity in this zone and demanded that the law be changed to remove the articles on industrial activity and bottom-trawling that allow these breaches to happen. The Environment and Research Working Group argued that CONAPACH should be able to rely upon a body of efficient and suitably qualified environmental scientists who can give necessary assessments to organizations faced with the problem of pollution. Regional workshops were proposed to improve the amount of environmental data available—both with regard to pollution and to the state of the fish stock. CONAPACH defends bays and inlets as a fundamental part of the fishermen's heritage and as the building blocks of artisanal fishing. With regard to the critical situation in some bays, non-transferable property rights should be granted on 99-year leases for the exclusive use of artisanal fishing organizations.

#### **Aquaculture projects**

Artisanal fishing organizations are now involved with aquaculture projects but need improved training in this field.

It was proposed that a network for exchange of information on prices and markets in Santiago, the capital of Chile, be set up along with a national model of co-ordinated sales of fish products from small and medium producer centres.

It was suggested that fishing be introduced into the education programme and that grants for children of artisanal fishing families be established to give them access to higher education. It was also felt that a maritime museum should be set up to record the history of artisanal fishing in Chile.

Due to their comparative isolation, rural fishing bays are at a disadvantage as far as development is concerned. They also fail to attract government money because of the lack of expertise to put forward projects. An improved base of technical advisers is needed to remedy this situation. The lack of co-ordination between the State and fishermen with regard to development projects is considered to be a major problem within the artisanal sector in Chile.

It is felt that there is no collective consciousness about artisanal fishing problems and that there is a lack of understanding of management problems by members of the organizations. Having agreed that there is a lack of attention paid to the role of women in the sector, a

women's department within CONAPACH was proposed.

CONAPACH urged the government to encourage increased national consumption of the artisanal catch which is, overall, very significant to the country's fish production.

**Recommendations made**

Various technical recommendations were made with regard to benthic, pelagic, demersal and aquaculture resources. Most of these recommendations urge the government to look into the issue of declining catch rates, and ways of preserving the resource. On aquaculture, the government was urged to change the rates charged for concessions: seaweed and salmon producers face the same charges despite the great disparity in profitability of the two types of production.

This summary of the report resulting from The 15th National Congress of CONAPACH (Congreso Nacional de Pescadores Artesanales de Chile) was written by Elizabeth Bennett, MSc Fisheries Management student at the University of Portsmouth, England.

## Fisheries law

# Full of loopholes

**Without a purposeful public debate, the proposed new fisheries law for Argentina will get nowhere**

**A**t a time when Congress is in the process of approving a new Fisheries Law, there is a disturbing lack of meaningful public debate on important aspects of this law, in particular with regard to the call for a change in the fishery regime and the introduction of Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) for vessels and species.

After the changes in the Fisheries Sub-secretariat, the new officials now attribute the near collapse of the resource to what is called the 'Olympic model' of fishery exploitation. This elegant way of dealing with the problem avoids both personal and political responsibility by blaming the previous resource regime, described as a common property and unrestricted access regime, where each fisherman or boatowner tried to maximize his catch, while observing no restrictions.

In their view, the answer lies in replacing this model with another, which divides the resources species-wise into 'private quotas' for each vessel. In theory, this mechanism will cause quota owners to take responsibility for conservation and will enable them to plan their annual activities better. Moreover, each quota has an exchange value with a market price, and this will add to the value of the fishery enterprise.

However, in other countries, like Iceland and the US, ITQs have already been shown to increase the concentration of ownership of fisheries capital in the hands of the owners of freezer and factory ships.

Worse still, they hasten the process of social disintegration, causing unemployment and marginalization. Because of this, fishing nations like

Norway are establishing various mechanisms to protect small- and medium-scale fisheries against the incursions of the owners of large trawlers.

In the latest draft of the Fisheries Law approved by a majority of the deputies from the Committee of Maritime Interest, there is passing reference to implementing a system of ITQs. However, it provides no details of how this is to be done, leaving the future Federal Fisheries Council (CFP) to work them out.

The lack of political will in Congress to address the central issue of the 'new fisheries model', delegating the task to other officials, contrasts with the detailed legislation passed by the parliaments of other countries.

CeDePesca has publicly expressed concern over the process of structural change being imposed on Argentinean fisheries. It is a process where a fleet of factory vessels, now accounting for 60 per cent of the catch, is displacing the traditional fresh-fish sector comprising boats supplying shore-based factories. Furthermore, it has shown that, rather than being brought about by a natural process of investment in fishing capital, it is the Executive Authority of the Secretariat for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and food, that has forced these changes through a series of resolutions and practical measures, particularly over the last six years.

## Signs of conflict

Today, the clearest signs of the conflict between the two fleets can be seen in the reported landings of hake (*Merluza argentina* or *M. hubbsi*) which have exceeded the sustainable limit by 180,000 tonnes. While the fresh-fish fleet has maintained its historic catch levels below

300,000 tonnes, in six years, the freezer vessels have increased their catches to around 300,000 tonnes, breaching both legal and biological limits.

**F**aced With this situation, there are only two solutions: either to fix quota levels or allocate allowable catches based on the landings of recent years. This would consolidate the position achieved by the (factory) freezer fleet and gravely affect the shore-based processing industry. Alternatively, the historic track record of the fresh-fish fleet could be taken into account and quotas allocated to the freezer fleet in line with their catches in 1990.

The creation of such an ITQ system, which allocates quotas on a proportional basis without checks and balances, is the most complex and roundabout way of consolidating the positions of the trawler owners belonging to CAPECA (Consortium of High Seas Freezer and Factory Vessel Owners), and is a springboard for them to continue increasing their control over the fishery resources.

In a dispatch from Reykjavik, Iceland, dated 20 July, the Associated Press correspondent Bryan Brumley noted that the population of the small fishing town of Sudureyri had decreased from 500 to 300, following the imposition of the ITQ system because, according to a fisherman named Jonsson, catches were being

concentrated in the hands of the owners of large vessels.

“The large operators,” the report continued, “are buying up the quotas of small fishermen and transferring them to factory vessels which process the catch at sea, forcing the closure of shore-based factories. Clearly, the sale of quotas is threatening the traditional Icelandic fishing family,” claimed Jonsson.

In its report entitled ‘ITQs and Privatizing the Oceans’, Greenpeace USA comments that “ITQs are a way of institutionalizing the ongoing process of concentration, rewarding those with the greatest capital assets and the largest fleets. Conglomerates like Tyson Seafoods or RGI (owners of American Seafoods) would be able to get the largest share (of quotas) through their vessels’ recent track records. They would also be in a position to buy additional quota, removing the allocation process from public control and leaving the forces of the market to decide who fishes.”

**Government view**

In the April 1994 edition of *Fishing News International*, a Namibian government official expressed a similar view: “With transferable quotas, established businesses with the strongest financial bases, the easiest access to capital and the greatest administrative experience are likely to find it easier to accumulate





quotas.” “In fact,” according to the article, “in some regions and amongst some populations the greatest limitation to applying ITQs more widely is the clear tendency for quota accumulation and (negative) socioeconomic impacts due to quota losses.”

**W**ith this in mind," the official was quoted as explaining, “we have studied some of the mechanisms which have been tried in the US and Iceland to reduce the socioeconomic impact of transferability by placing restrictions on who can exchange quotas.

As far as we can see, the final result for the North American swordfish and halibut fisheries is so complex that all the benefits of transferability have been erased. For these reasons, in Namibia, we have introduced a system which can be described as Individual Non-Transferable Quotas. FAO and World Bank reports also raise doubts about the appropriateness of this system for developing countries.”

At the risk of using too many examples, we have tried to demonstrate clearly that the draft fishery Law’s passing reference to the ITQ system is an inadmissible act of tokenism. That being so, we hope that there is still time to implement a legally binding regime of resource conservation which will contribute to alleviating

today’s biological and socioeconomic crisis without making it worse.

In this regard, several systems have been proposed, one of which consists of ring-fencing the historic catch levels of the fresh-fish fleet, and introducing ITQs for catches above these levels.

Even though the importance of artisanal fisheries is widely recognized and is acknowledged in several international treaties and conventions, in our country artisanal fisheries have no legal status, and neither are they mentioned in the draft fisheries law.

Artisanal fishers are neither owners nor workers: they are artisans in their own right. As artisans, they do not work for profit in the strict sense, but rather for subsistence. Given their subsistence way of life and low potential earnings, they require a special status.

There are many national and international programmes which aim to develop and improve artisanal fisheries. Of particular note is Article 6.18 of the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, which highlights the important contribution of small-scale and artisanal fisheries to employment, income and food security.

**Just livelihood**

It also recommends that States should protect the rights of fishworkers to a just

and secure livelihood. Quota allocation does not alter the fact that fisheries resources are a national asset. Fishery resources remain renewable only if extraction rates are rigidly kept within sustainable limits. For this reason, participatory fisheries management is developing as a generally recognized practice worldwide.

**F**isheries committees, councils and other bodies have been constituted as genuine democratic institutions, through which the various actors can achieve consensus and place restrictions on some gaining advantages over others, and sharing responsibility for conserving resources.

In the draft law under discussion, there are two forums for participation: the Federal Fisheries Council (CFP) and the Advisory Committee. The former comprises the new Fisheries Sub-secretary (a new post, which may one day evolve into that of an Ocean's Minister), four representatives of PEN (the National Executive Council), and one representative from each maritime province.

It is clear that this organization, which is supposed to play an important role as a counterpart to the Executive Authority of the Secretariat for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries and Food, is made up exclusively of members with executive powers, but has no established links with the Regional Councils and Provincial Fisheries Committees.

In its turn, the Advisory Committee of this body will comprise trade union and industry representatives, according to a ruling made by the CFP itself. However, there is no legal obligation for the Secretariat or the CFP to follow their recommendations.

We do not understand why there is still such a deeply embedded fear in our society over the active participation of social and economic stakeholders in managing areas where they compete. Why not set up a monitoring committee or even a Federal Council with these actors, to make recommendations, control policy implementation and to seriously involve its members in management?

Why not establish clear guidelines for the election of members of this committee? Why not involve NGOs like Greenpeace and CeDePesca who have shown that they have an important contribution to make in the area of fisheries? Why not establish the link now between the Provincial Committees and the Councils that are being set up?

Such a genuine network of linkages, which functions in countries like Chile, Iceland and the US, is the best guarantee against *ad hoc* resource management. It is also the best guarantee for legal stability that we can offer.

At the same time, it will provide a mechanism to ensure that no one 'appropriates' the fisheries policy, compromising the present and future economy and associated employment.

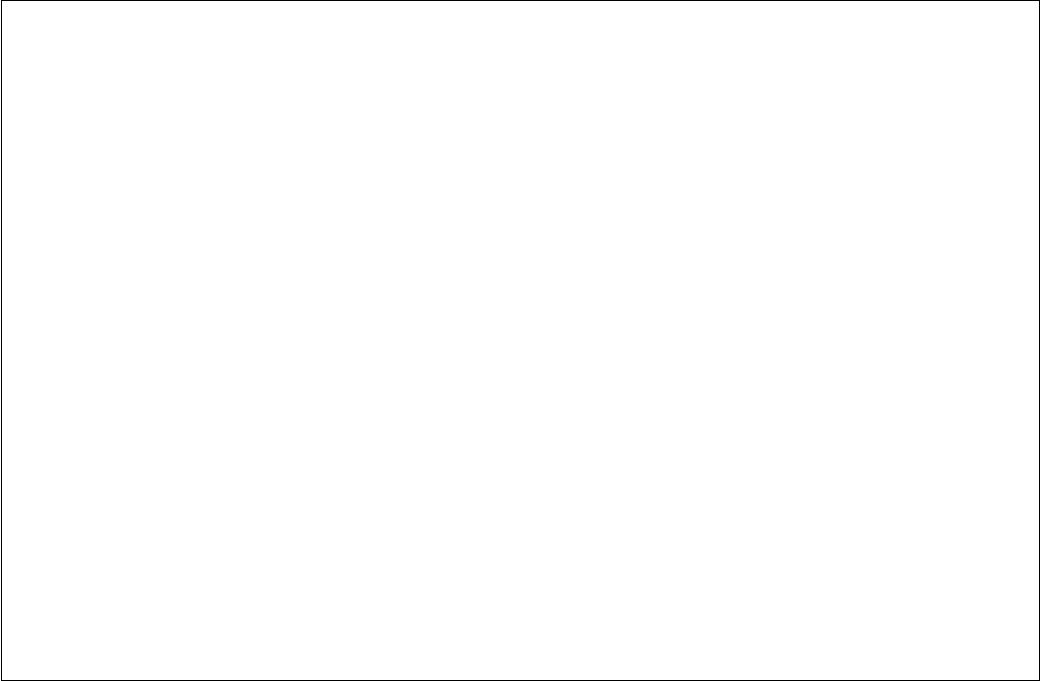
The draft law under discussion also prevents INIDEP (the National Institute for Fisheries Research and Development) from publishing statistics or data not previously submitted to the Secretariat.

In fact, information on resources owned by every Argentinean should be published, and the law should oblige the Executive Authority to publish it within 24 hours. We are not, of course, talking about preliminary reports, but, in general,

### **CeDePesca**

Recently established in Mar del Plate, CeDePesca is an NGO whose aim is to lobby for socially equitable and sustainable fisheries. Its main work is the production and dissemination of information that advances this aim. It conducts research and Undertakes public awareness-raising campaigns aimed at achieving a balance in the fishery debate, emphasizing the Importance of the women and men who derive their livelihoods from fisheries activities.

The only condition required to become a member of CeDePesca is a sharing of the concerns on which the organization is based. Currently, CeDePesca is undertaking a campaign to preserve tin fresh-fish fishing fleet's historic quota, while advocating a legally binding quota allocation system which protects them.



all the statistics being produced on fisheries and the information coming from INIDEP's studies should be made available for public debate in time, and while it is still relevant.

We desperately need a new fisheries law to replace the vague legislation that we currently have. However, it is such an important and delicate subject that it is worthwhile waiting a little bit longer so that, through public debate, we can enrich its content and prevent arbitrary and spurious pressures.



This article, written by Ernesto Godelman, Chairman, CeDePesca, Mar del Plata, was translated from the Spanish by Brian O’Riordan

# Stealing the common

**Fisheries management must take care not only of fish and the environment, but also fishing people and their material resources**

I am very grateful to the organizing committee for inviting me all the way from Israel to talk about current developments in fisheries, from a fisherman's perspective. I'll try to do that and also ask some questions and raise some issues that are increasingly nagging my mind and, perhaps yours as well.

You'll excuse an old salt for sticking to the term fisherman. Having been a fisherman for a considerable part of my life and having to do with fishermen for the rest of it, I've a problem with becoming a 'harvester'. To me, these terms are not synonymous. Fishing is not just harvesting. It's an art and a way of life, and an ongoing, often violent and dangerous dispute with nature. Fishermen of both gender are a special brand of brave, intelligent individualists with, deny it or not, a romantic association with their boats, the sea and adventure, and who, incidentally, provide the world annually with around 90 million tonnes of fish and try to make a decent living doing it.

Nowadays fisheries are bogged down in an extremely complex and contradictory situation: there is increasing market demand, rising fish prices, and advanced technology, on the one hand, and restricted resources, some depleted, on the other, with fishery workers in the midst.

Let's take a look at the state of the world's fishery resources. Some are still underexploited, most are exploited close to the maximum, others are fully or even excessively exploited, and some overfished, with a few of them in a state of collapse. Whatever is the actual fishing power, marine fish landings remain fluctuating at between 80 million and 90 million tonnes annually. The prevailing mood, as expressed in the press and other media, is that of gloom.

However, is this mood justified? In a new analysis of a 45-year time-series (1950-1994), FAO indicates a possibility of a substantial increase of the total world marine fish landings. A growth, up to an additional third of the world's landings, seems possible by further development of the 40 per cent of underexploited stocks, mainly in the Pacific and Indian Oceans, and of mariculture (salmon excluded). An additional increase of around 10 per cent can be achieved by management. Such management was applied, for example, to the Northeast Arctic cod stock in the Norwegian and Barents Seas, or in the Philippines, Cyprus, and the Gulf of Castellamare in Sicily. All this is apart from the estimated 27 million tonnes of fish caught, but, for various reasons, either not landed, or just not reported.

Unfortunately, the Northwest Atlantic Ocean houses most of the stocks of bottom fish pronounced overexploited and that ocean, since the early 1970s, has been yielding, with some ups and downs, less and less catch. Environmental fluctuations or not, most of this decline must be ascribed to excessive fishing. How it happened, why it happened, and what to do to make sure it never happens again is a major issue. Marine fish resources are finite, but what's our knowledge about their limits?

**Role of science**

To discuss fishery management debacles, we must ask, among other questions, how stocks are affected by fishing effort and by environment. How scientific is the science used to determine desirable yields and/or effort, and how reliable are the assessment methods responsible for the answers we're getting? Whether the 'best available science' of today provides an adequate basis for rational management is hotly argued among fisheries scientists.

The traditional science is based on mathematical models of exploited fish populations developed decades ago. These models, along with acoustic surveys, are still the main pillars of wisdom on which fishery management is based.

**W**e all know how difficult it is, in spite of the many theories, to forecast, not to speak of controlling, the workings of an economy. Even some economists admit that economic systems are rather chaotic and comprise many unpredictable variables. Ecosystems, fishery ecosystems included, are even more so. For, what is ecology if not 'economics of nature'? Take economics: the main economic units of exchange, which are money and its equivalents, are relatively few, and most of the participating factors and most of the rules that come with them are known.

In ecology, the business of energy and food exchange that goes on within every ecosystem is more complex and less known, and the rules and inter-relations between the various 'clients' and their surroundings not yet well defined, while the units of exchange are numerous, with prices' changing all the time.

Both economics and ecology are not exact sciences. The factor of human free will often assumes the role of the skunk in the garden party of economic models, and the various, mostly unpredictable, climatic fluctuations and other environmental changes upset results obtained by means of even the most elegant fish population dynamics models.

Still, these are the sciences that are supposed to provide much of the wisdom for fisheries management decisions. Only too often we forget the rule that any scientific theory must be prone to be scientifically disproved. This rule applies also to fishery ecosystems.

Most models used by fishery biologists do not express environmental changes and fluctuations and their real-time effect on the abundance, natural mortality, availability, and vulnerability of fish populations. They use guessed and 'guesstimated' inputs, and mostly ignore

climatic and hydrographic variables, and inter-relations with other species in the system. They may be relied on for some stocks existing under ecologically stable conditions and, with qualifications, for long-living species. Even more recent models designed to deal with multi-species fisheries are not the answer, because both intensive fishing and environmental factors, such as, for example, water temperature, often cause fast changes in the species composition, and, hence, in the whole ecosystem of such fisheries.

On the other side of the argument stands the so-called 'holistic' school of thought. It contends that a science that handles populations in separation from the system's physical parameters, on the one hand, and the given population's prey, predators and competitors, on the other, can not be relied on. Unfortunately, while the traditional models are relatively simple and do not involve too many variables and actual data, and can be solved using simple hardware and software, holistic models would be very difficult both to design and operate, and very complex in structure.

Such models would require an assessment of natural mortality and recruitment in real time, for each different environment. This would need plenty of knowledge on the effect of fishing effort and environmental conditions on various stocks, and a better understanding of the working inter-relations of the cogs of the ecological clockwork.

New supercomputers and software capabilities signal the evolving possibilities of integration of population models with environmental data and causation correlations. Until, however, enough time, money and research effort have been spent, applicable holistic models are not on the cards, and we are left with the unsolved issue of the inadequacy of conventional methodology.

#### Time lags

The problem of the adequacy of the science is topped with another one. There are time lags between several stages: data collection, analysis, reporting, discussions with decision makers, and the process of

having the management measures agreed on and implemented.

All this removes the reaction of the management system, often by a couple of years, from the processes occurring in real time in the fishery. Additional distortions may occur if scientists in charge of stock assessment, due to exerted or perceived pressure, are not telling the truth, only the truth, and nothing but the truth.

There is also the issue of our uncalled-for partners. The fishing industry used to be the main or only user and steward of marine fish resources, fishing grounds and the related environment. Not any more. The competition for resource allocation is growing, the new partners being the offshore oil industry, sport fishery, tourist arid recreational industry, and fish farming, as well as the municipal, industrial, and farming sectors that use the sea as their dumping ground.

Then, there are the 'green' organizations, and governmental and intergovernmental institutions that represent the general interests of society at large pertaining to the environment and the effects of human interventions on fish stocks and the rest of marine life systems. All this may be irritating, but can not be ignored.

One problem with some of the 'green' organizations is that they seem to

sometimes confuse the conservation of a species and its population with that of individual animals, even after the endangered population recovers. Some go to the extreme by calling to reinstate the fishing grounds to their pristine, virgin state, forgetting that this can not be done without ceasing all fishing.

Then there is the issue of how recent developments affect fishery workers and their communities? Well, just look around. For example, in some areas, shifting fishing effort away from small-scale fisheries to factory ships able to move in international and 'chartered' national fishing grounds have led to dislocations (what a term!) not only of smaller fishing vessels and their crews, but also of fishworkers on land. Whole communities have been affected.

For example, depletion of certain major stocks have led to closures and 'buy-outs', with all sorts of socioeconomic consequences, including unemployment among fisherfolk. Also, introduction of transferable fishing quotas has led to amassing of fishing rights away from the smaller operators.

Third World

There is the plight of small-scale fishermen in the Third World, and perhaps anywhere else where small-scale operators have little access to information, credit, equipment, materials, and fuel



supplies, at prices and conditions available to larger-scale operators.

**T**herefore, many of them are bound to sell their catch to moneylenders, a practice that often results in unbelievable interest rates. The plight of these fishermen has often more to do with their socioeconomic and socio-cultural positions and political weakness than with the state of their resources.

They also suffer from large fishing vessels encroaching on their traditional fishing grounds. Sometimes, they fight back, and, recently, there were more rounds of this struggle in India, Indonesia and Chile. No doubt more people can make their living in small-scale fisheries out of the same resource, often at a lesser cost, than in larger-scale operations.

Governments that allow industrial, often extra-national, fleets into such fishing grounds, on the plea of often, dubious 'national' benefits or better economic performance, may be doing their countries more damage than good.

There is also the issue of technology. It is continually improving fish capture, navigation, fish handling and processing. But, with very few exceptions, it has failed to provide truly selective fishing gear. Selectivity through mesh size is proving ineffective.

A recent study has shown that a large proportion of undersized pelagic fish that escape through the meshes of a trawl die later on, of stress, of wounds incurred, or of loss of scales. Even gill-netting, for long considered a rather selective fishing method, may produce unacceptable amounts of fish and non-fish by-catch, as happens in tuna drift-nets.

Soon, with the increasing weight of environmental considerations, including by-catch, discards, overfishing, and creation of marine reserves in more and more countries, a lot is going to depend on technological and operational factors.

We have a fish-hungry market that controls not only the amount of fishing effort but also the target species this effort is directed at, and, thus, the gear and methods used. Its ever-increasing

pressure spurs fishery industries to use ever-improving technology to catch and process more and more fish resources, some of which, like those in the North Atlantic, are exploited to their utmost.

We have socioeconomic problems due to pressures on the people who make their living out of fisheries. We have the problems caused by a fishery management which, again and again, proves unable to secure reasonable catch levels not only because it is based on inadequate fishery science, but also due to wrong choice of management measures, international and inter-sectoral bickering, a lack of political will and deficient administrative and enforcement capabilities.

It is ironic that where and when such political will appeared, accompanied by sufficient funding and enforcement it was usually after the stocks had already collapsed.

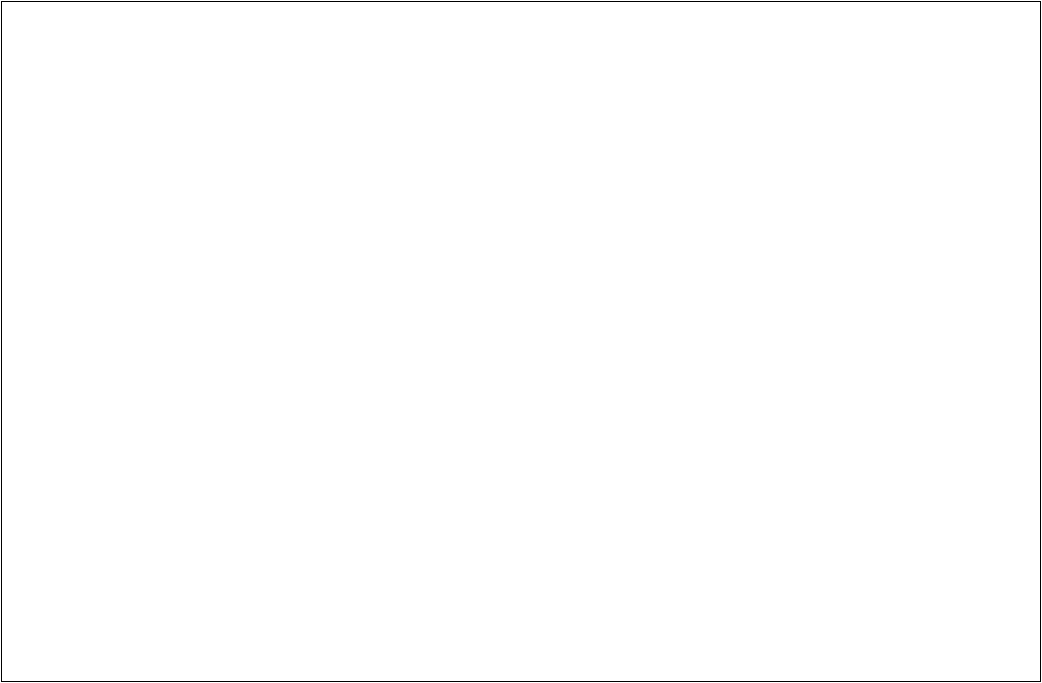
We have the ecological problem of man-made pollution that is overloading the seas with nutrients and poisons, causing havoc in marine ecosystems, and, here and there, outright poisoning of the sea, the fish and, eventually, consumers. And we have technologies that have been so busy enhancing effort that they now have a long way to go to tackle other problems.

We live in a free-market and free-enterprise economic system characterized by accelerating consumerism. Most of us seem to enjoy this system and hate political regimes that interfere with our liberal ways of trading, investing, making profits, employing people, etc.

The ideology of this system is that if some of us made good, everybody can and should. Some of us seem to be thinking that the rules of this catch-as-catch-can game are applicable everywhere, including management of fishery resources.

#### **Points of view**

This situation can be looked at from two points of view: a short- and a long-term. In the short term, both individual and corporate operators compete for what is



available and reap benefits as fast as possible. Some of them, such as highliners, may succeed. This approach fits in an expanding free-market, catch-as-catch-can economy which thrives on competition and on the freedom of its participants to chase profits as they see fit, within or without the law.

**R**ight or wrong elsewhere, in fisheries this is wrong. Participants in worldwide economic competitions are struggling for shares in an ever-growing cake. Whatever is the potential of the capture-fishery cake, its fluctuating size is ultimately limited, and we all know how sensitive and vulnerable it is to concentrated, industrial pressure. We also know how, within a short time, this cake can shrink, especially where the cream and the raisins are.

The catch-as-catch-can approach is deadly to the long-term interests of fishing communities, the fishery industry and society at large, all of whom have vested interests not only in sustaining landings at reasonable levels, but also in distributing benefits to a maximum number of people.

To put all the things together into a system which would allow for a rational exploitation of marine fish resources and provide decent social and economic benefits to fishery workers and their communities, as well as to society at large, willy-nilly, we are back with the issue of

fishery management. Although today's powerful vessels normally catch less fish per unit of effort than their much weaker, smaller and cheaper predecessors of some decades ago, international and local competition and market pressures, in combination with lopsided management steps, keep fuelling excess effort. The debacles of the Grand Banks and Georges Banks, on the one hand, and the Black Sea ecological disaster, on the other, caused governments and operators alike to start thinking about the need for good national and international fisheries and environmental management.

Rational management must be based on all we know of the given ecosystem and its effects on the fishery, and on an assessment of reasonable yield and/or effort. But an understanding of the workings of the fishery ecosystem is only one side of the management coin.

The other is good knowledge and consideration of the fishing population, markets, associated industry, enforcement capacity and political will in the managed area, and of the fishing people's attitudes and their possible reactions to various management options.

**Frustrations**

Management steps, even if based on the best calculated annual quotas or permissible fishing effort, will be useless if resisted by the fishing people. Haven't



they got, apart from legitimate opposition, 1001 ways of frustrating management steps that they consider unjust or unreasonable?

Some fishery ecosystems are affected by harmful pollution. The collapse of fisheries in the Black Sea is a quite terrible example of what pollution can do in semi-enclosed and enclosed marine basins. Thus, management of fish resources and management of the environment have become inseparable.

Some people, rather rightly, insist that management is meant to look after the best interests of society at large, not just the fishing communities *per se*. But this brings us to a political and socioeconomic issue as to what is best for the society at large and what is the importance of fishery workers and their communities within that society. There is also the political tension among the various fishing sectors which may lead to policy paralysis, and, consequently, disable the management.

The question arises, therefore, whether fishing people and the fishing industry should leave to others all fishery management initiatives and practices, with all the associated research, design of management schemes and their implementation. Should their attitude to management effort be to regard it only as a nuisance that has to be politically

contained? Or, perhaps, self- and co-management in their various variants may form an effective attitude changer, so that fishing people respect management rules as they respect the marine 'rule of the road'; and governments recognize the advantages of community- and industry-inspired management and part with their absolute power of setting TACS, quotas and enforcement rules.

I believe that many small-scale and artisanal fishermen, especially the underfinanced ones, have also inherent self-regulating mechanisms preventing critical overexploitation of their resources. They flexibly shift fishing methods, fishing grounds and target species. Whenever catches or prices are low, they run out of working capital and cease fishing. Thus, effort is reduced and the stock 'rests'.

There are no such mechanisms among the often subsidized trawling and purse-seining fleets. They enjoy financing at normal interest rates and may go on exploiting coastal resources straight into bankruptcy, or fish out what is there and move elsewhere. Still, the local fishermen are blamed. As the old English rhyme goes:

*They hang the man and flog the woman  
That steal the goose from off the common,  
But let the greater villain loose  
That steals the common from the goose.*

**F**ishery management is not only about the quantity of fish to be extracted or effort to be exerted. It determines, admittedly or not, the allocation of resources among the various sectors of the industry, and who and how many people are going to make their living out of the fishery. Politics? Yes, because management steps can only be selected according to policy objectives of the elected policymakers. The catalogue of possible management steps is quite large. One needs clear policy objectives to select rationally those that fit the particular local socio-cultural, economic, political, biological and physical situation.

Some people seem to be attracted to a single medication for all maladies. The fashionable one now is the famous Individual Transferable Quotas (ITQs) that one can purchase or win on auction from the government and then sell on the free market. Some of the thinking goes like this: excessive fishing effort keeps increasing because fish are a 'common property' and everybody is trying to increase their share of the cake.

This inevitably leads to 'tragedies': depletion of stocks and impoverishment of the fisherfolk. So, let's manage the stock by 'privatizing' the fishery. The highest private (or corporate) bidders would exploit the resource for their best financial profits. They can best take care of the goose and its golden eggs, and the best way to 'privatization' is through marketable quotas. Simple, isn't it? All the more so since such thinking is in line with the fashionable economic trend that everything that's private works better than anything that's public, and that the best decisions are taken according to the supply-and-demand game and the resulting profits.

Economic history, however, is full of examples of how resources that have become marketable have accumulated in fewer and fewer hands. I have little doubt that with marketable quotas and fishing rights sold to the highest bidder, sooner or later we will have Texas-size ranches and *latifundia* at sea. After some time, fishing people will get wise about what's going on. Then it won't help telling them that the great owner is extracting a higher economic rent than 1000 small owners

could ever make, and that it serves the economy' (whatever that means) better. Tell that to the marines when they are called up to defend the ships and installations of the bigwigs. I'm afraid that fishermen don't believe in extracting economic rents. They believe in making a living.

This whole concept that fisheries management is about "how to extract maximum rent from the resource on a sustained basis" is justified by a presumption that any profits made are eventually recycled throughout society and everybody benefits. But how many countries can indeed boast of having the rent extracted from its resource by large-scale trawling fleets recycled in their own economy? And who can tell me where go the benefits extracted by a Panama-flagged vessel, owned by a multinational company registered wherever it is registered—Liberia? Cayman Islands? Ships like that are often manned by mixed Pacific Eastern and Southeast Asian crews, most of them severely underpaid and slaving under disagreeable working and living conditions. You let the owner buy a quota and here she comes flying a brand-new flag.

Unwieldy restrictions, privatization that dislocates fisherfolk, and inappropriate management systems can not be sustainable. Ever heard of prohibition? Ever heard about 'over-the-side' business of crews selling at sea by-catch and extra catch to traders and 'Klondikers'? Ever heard of people landing fish by swimming and pushing floated bags with fish? Ever heard how whitefish become 'blackfish'? With growing demand and all those redundant boats and people, the cost of enforcement will become prohibitive and the surveillance corruptible. Eventually, I'm afraid, some fisheries may become a mafia business.

#### **Capitalism gone wild**

All this is not against capitalism and free markets. It is against capitalism going wild. There is nothing holy about markets. Some markets are monsters—take drugs or guns—and you know what they do to society if they're left to go unbridled. Neither am I against quotas, transferable or not. My point is that they may fit some

but not other places and situations. Their application must be locally examined. I'm sure, for example, that for fishing off the Antarctic continent, ITQs would be an appropriate management tool,

Take the 'open access' issue. It is claimed that a fishery that's free for all and exploited on a 'catch-as-catch-can' basis is on a sure path to overfishing. Where, for example, thousands of artisanal fishermen are employing canoes, *kattumarams*, *jangadas* and other small fishing craft from open beaches, access can not be practically limited and catch quotas of any sort can not be enforced.

Under such conditions, to avert the infamous 'tragedy of the commons, it is the effort that should be limited. Limiting days at sea, closed seasons, short working weeks, etc., if worked out in a way that does not affect the operational efficiency or increase operational costs, and is agreed on with the fisherfolk, can best be enforced by themselves. To keep fishing power from otherwise expanding, fishing time limitation might be accompanied by limiting also the number, size and power of the fishing craft.

Thus, quotas and privatization are inappropriate where resources are exploited by thousands of small-scale fishermen and the derived benefits widely distributed. On the other hand, ITQs may fit well in areas not accessible to small-scale operators or where fishing populations are too small. What's just fine for one place may be totally wrong for another.

Limiting access and effort control are only too often disregarded, though they may be quite efficient, especially in co-management schemes.

As I sum it all up, wrong or right, if fishery is about people producing food out of fish stocks, fishery resources are the resources of fish, people and their means of production. If so, fishery management must take care not only of fish and their environment, but also of the fishing people and their material resources.

Also, I think that the management of fisheries can not be handled right if it selects its measures by only market and

the so-called 'economic efficiency' criteria, and trifles with the resulting social and political price?

Maybe the people whose only criteria are dollar profits, and who don't want or don't know how to put a dollar figure to the social price of their favourite solutions, should change their criteria. Most people agree now that for the protection of our environment, economic/financial criteria are insufficient. Aren't fishing people and their communities a part of the environment, like redwoods, dolphins and rhinos?

Still, on the world's scale, fishery remains relatively manageable. The situation of the air we breathe, the ozone layer, sea and groundwater pollution, the greenhouse effect, forest devastation, and our own spermatozoa is much worse. Life on our planet will not be ruined by overfishing, bad as it may be, but by overpopulation and pollution.

**Options for action**  
Fishery workers have options for action. They can independently assess governments' and scientists' recommendations. They can initiate and participate in co-management schemes. They can insist on management solutions for preserving fishing communities. They can initiate and participate in anti-pollution activities. They can support selective technologies. And they can organize for joint and international activities.

This was the keynote lecture delivered by fisheries consultant Menakhem Ben-Yami at the St. John's Conference of Harvesters in the North Atlantic Fisheries

# Don't repeat others' mistakes

**This open letter addresses some of the critical issues relevant to a marine fisheries policy for South Africa**

The new White Paper on South Africa Marine Fisheries marks an important step in the process of redistributing and sharing more equitably South Africa's marine resource wealth. It sets out to right the wrongs and injustices of the past, and is a serious attempt to establish a basis for the sustainable and equitable development of South Africa's fisheries resources. Its particular emphasis on intergenerational equity and long-term sustainability; the allocation of access rights in a fair and equitable manner; and the redistribution of income and employment opportunities in favour of the poor are important objectives. It is an initiative of great significance, and is to be welcomed.

However, some of the reform proposals raise serious issues of concern. In our view, the highly idealistic goals which the White Paper sets out to achieve are contradicted by several of the actual reform mechanisms detailed in the text.

In particular, we are concerned that the new fisheries policy makes no mention of restoring the fishing access or livelihood rights of the artisanal fishworkers, which were forcibly deprived from them in the 1970s. Criminalized under the apartheid regime and branded as poachers, and categorized today as 'subsistence fishermen', the artisanal fishworkers' livelihood rights are still severely curtailed. The reference to artisanal fishermen as 'subsistence fishermen' recognizes only their subsistence rights. The conditions set out in the White Paper, under which artisanal fishermen have to operate, deny them their rights to fully engage in their traditional way of life, to benefit from equal access to resources, and prejudices their rights to equal employment and income opportunities. These are serious shortcomings, and

unless addressed, the stated ideals of the new fisheries policy to broaden participation in the fishery and to allow greater access to resources by those who have been denied access previously, will remain utopian. It is also of concern that the White Paper states that "non-reliable information is available with regard to employment in the subsistence sector." We feel that this is tantamount to denying the existence of this important sector and the rights of its members to participate in the fishery. We feel that this lack of information and understanding needs to be remedied as a matter of some urgency.

The emphasis of the White Paper on 'real rights' which can be purchased through a transparent and competitive process against payment of an appropriate fee is also a cause for concern. Such cash- or market-based quota allocation systems have disenfranchised artisanal fishermen in many other parts of the world, where Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) systems have concentrated access rights and ownership of quotas in the hands of a few large companies.

There are other, more equitable ways of allocating quotas and establishing access rights, for example, through Territorial Use Rights and Community Allocated Quotas. These systems allow for much greater participation, and provide important checks against the accumulation of quotas.

**Ways of recouping**

We would like to suggest that, while it is both desirable and fair that stakeholders who share in the wealth of the seas should contribute in some way to the management and regulation of marine resources, there are ways of recouping management and administration costs other than through the payment of fees.

For example, the White Paper highlights the participation of local communities in resource Management (Section 3.8). Co-management not only offers the possibility of greater participation in resource management, but also provides a mechanism through which administration and management costs can be shared with stakeholder groups. Allocating resource access through a fee-paying mechanism immediately introduces a bias in favour of the haves over the have-nots. It has the potential to prevent economically vulnerable groups from getting a foothold in the industry, and could hinder the redistribution of income and other benefits to the poor.

In our view, the White Paper makes the fundamental mistake of confusing fishermen with fishing capacity. By placing greater emphasis on the small-scale sector, and by the judicious selection of technology, we feel that it will be possible to restructure the fishery in ways which provide greater employment opportunities.

In this regard, we also feel that there is insufficient importance given to selectivity and diversity of fishing gear, and that a combination of seasonality, selectivity, capital and labour can be used to reduce fishing effort, while increasing Income and employment opportunities for the disadvantaged sectors. We feel that these aspects, together with the establishment of an exclusive fishing zone within the 110-fathom depth contour for the artisanal sector, should be given greater emphasis.

We feel that greater emphasis also needs to be placed on the small-scale processing sector and associated markets for fish in Africa, so that protein-rich fish can be used to feed people rather than intensively farmed livestock.

The emphasis the White Paper places on larger, vertically integrated canning, freezing and reduction industries limits the scope for income and employment opportunities. In other parts of Africa, the artisanal processing of fish through curing (smoking, salting and sun drying) provides the basis of thriving and vibrant labour-intensive industries, as well as providing an important source of

low-cost protein for the masses. In our view, better use could be made of the rich pelagic fisheries (pilchard, anchovy, and horse mackerel) and the by-catch from trawl and purse-seine fisheries by artisanal processing, both in terms of employment generated and human food provided than is currently the case in the canning and reduction industries.

In our experience, such centralized, relatively large-scale industries employ far fewer people and concentrate the benefits in far fewer hands than small-scale, decentralized processing industries. We feel that small-scale decentralized industries have much greater potential to redistribute fishery benefits in favour of the poor than the 'rainbow managed' companies described in the White Paper (Section 4.6.1.3). However, the development of such artisanal processing is severely handicapped by the constraints applied to 'subsistence' fishermen, and the limitations placed on the sale of their catch.

In our view, a noticeable omission in the White Paper is an intervention or floor price for fish. Such a mechanism could provide further protection to artisanal fishermen faced with unscrupulous buying practices of traders, and market price fluctuations caused by supply and demand factors.

In our experience, unplanned and unrestricted development of mariculture has led to the destruction of valuable coastal environments, the depletion of biodiversity, and the loss of traditional access rights of coastal people to the sea in many parts of the world. We urge you not to repeat the costly mistakes made in other parts of the world where, in the name of short-term financial gain, long-term development prospects have been severely damaged.

#### **Fishery agreements**

Finally, (and although not explicitly covered in the White Paper), we would like to voice our concern over the signing of fishery access agreements with third countries. In our experience, such agreements have tended to encourage the export of overfishing from Europe and elsewhere, and we urge you not to repeat

the mistakes of other African countries. Foreign fishing fleets, often heavily subsidized by their national governments, can seriously damage the development prospects of fisheries by using fishing patterns and technologies which effectively strip-mine and export valuable but vulnerable living marine resources.

The dire situation in West African fisheries, which have a long history of third country fishery access agreements, is graphically illustrated by the FAO in its report on the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture, 1996: “..offshore stocks are heavily overfished... - in one area, recent assessments show a decrease of about 50 per cent of total biomass... most demersal stocks are fully exploited” (page 99).

In our view, foreign fishing fleets (fishing both legally and illegally) have contributed to this. Thus, in Senegal, the EU, having fished out first shrimp, then tuna and now demersal stocks, is currently targeting pelagic stocks in the classic strategy of ‘fishing down the food chain’, characteristic of so many industrial distant-water fishing fleets. We voice these concerns in the spirit of cooperation and solidarity and wish you the very best of success in redirecting South Africa’s fishing policy in favour of the people whose livelihoods depend on living marine resources.

This letter, dated 15 August 1997, and addressed to the president of South Africa, was written by Brian O’Riordan, Fisheries Technology Policy Officer, Intermediate Technology Development Group, Rugby, UK

South Africa

## A novel pragmatism

**South Africa's fledgling fisheries policy seeks to create a pragmatic means of retaining industrial and economic stability in the industry**

**T**hank you very much for your constructive and comprehensive comments on my department's White Paper on Marine Fisheries. It is always valuable to read about the experiences elsewhere in the world and to try to apply them to one's own situation. I will, of course, bear your comments in mind (as well as the comments currently being made by many of my countrymen) when our new Marine Resources Bill and its associated regulative legislation is debated later this year.

At the outset, I must point out that South Africa's fisheries are mature and, in contrast to the situation in many other parts of the world, in a relatively healthy state. More than 26,000 people currently depend directly on the fishing industry for their livelihood. Such people would not, I am sure, be pleased if I were to support a mechanism which simply replaces their livelihood with a livelihood for others. It is on that premise that the drafters of the White Paper have come up with what I consider to be a pragmatic means of retaining industrial and economic stability in the industry while affording, through the establishment of novel new schemes, a means whereby those previously marginalized can obtain a real and meaningful stake. I am sure the accent on creation of more small- and medium-sized enterprises in the policy objectives has not escaped your notice,

I would not normally respond to all your suggestions in detail, but as you have highlighted eight clear concerns, perhaps you will allow me to common briefly on them.

The definitions of 'artisanal', 'subsistence', 'traditional' and indeed other forms of fishing such as 'recreational' and 'commercial' are

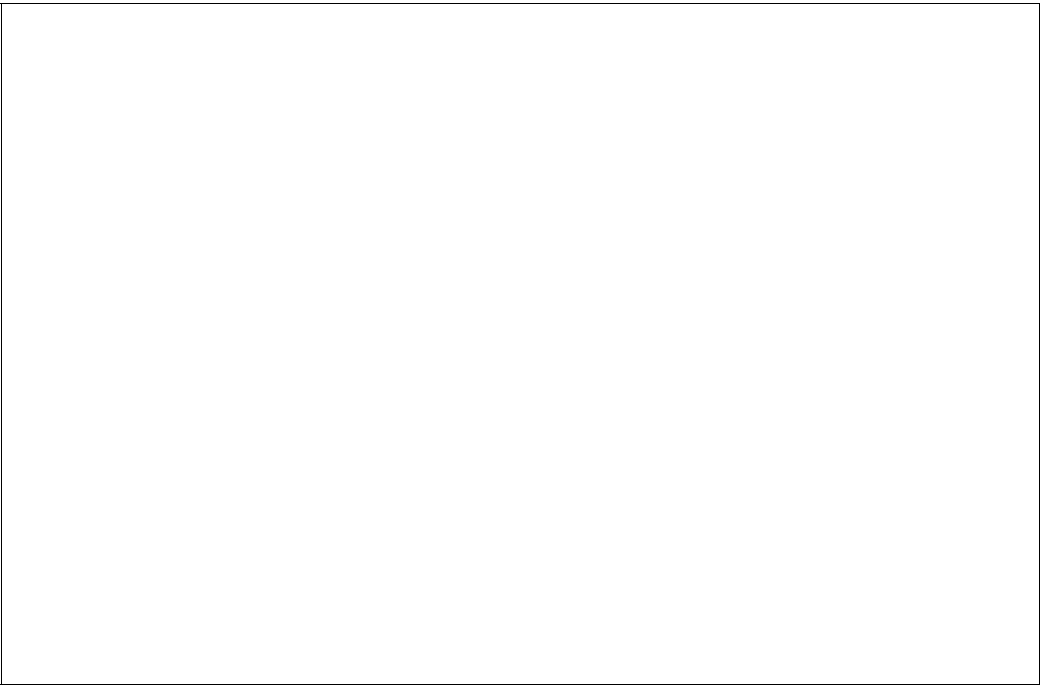
clearly stated. Individual interpretation of the meanings of such terms can vary, but I am certainly clear in my mind what is meant. Given that fact, your link between an artisanal way of life, subsistence and poaching is difficult to comprehend. The current poaching of abalone and rock lobster is systematically removing the livelihoods of many for what can only be short-term gain. There will be no future fishing industry at all if people take the law into their own hands just at the time when we are trying to put at rest the inequities of the past.

I do not agree with your sentiments about the inadvisability of charging fees for the use of a resource. Fisheries management is an expensive process and it is appropriate that users pay for the privilege that they have and someone else does not. Transparency must be preserved in the bidding process and the cost need not be economically crippling. My advisers also looked at TURFs and South Africa had a brief flirtation with the idea of community quotas. Neither is widely appropriate in South Africa at this time.

Co-management is an option I am investigating, but I am confident that what we are seeking (a mixture of co-management and State control, including a user fee) is as relevant in South Africa as it may be elsewhere in both the First and Third World.

### Policy objectives

I am confident that the drafters did not confuse fishing capacity with fishermen, I have already stressed the move to smaller-scale enterprises in the policy objectives, and that statement includes acknowledgement of the value of, *inter alia*, allowing some longlining as well as trawling for hake, our commercially dominant species.



Establishing an exclusive ‘no-go zone’ inside 110 fathoms for ‘artisanal fishermen’, as you propose, would not favour the host of other fishermen, e.g. true subsistence and true recreational. Such action has proved hopelessly ineffective as a management measure off Namibia, where there are few subsistence and recreational fishermen.

Processing and onward value-adding are, of course, meaningful ways for many to gain a foothold in the fishing industry and the White Paper advocates such action. However, I still fail to grasp your argument regarding artisanal activity in those sectors, given the clear definition of the term.

I agree with you about a floor price for fish, but doubt that such a statement belongs in a White Paper.

Mariculture will not, I believe, develop unplanned in South Africa. Advisory groups have been put in place for both management and ecosystem impacts of mariculture within my Chief Directorate of Sea Fisheries. I am confident that our current controls preclude any of the negative impacts you mention from taking place here. Mariculture must develop to benefit the very folk whose flag you are flying in your letter.

Your concern about any country entering into fisheries agreements with other

countries is valid. My country has no intention of selling out the requirements and rights of its needy fisherfolk for gain in other sectors. I draw your attention to the third last bullet under 4.10 of the White Paper. Only “in cases where inadequate local capacity prevails, and conditional upon specific authorization” will foreign involvement be considered.

Notwithstanding the above, I thank you most sincerely for your interest in South Africa’s fledgling fisheries policy. Support, both local and foreign, is vital to its successful implementation. 3

This reply to Brian O’Riordan, Fisheries Technology Policy Officer, ITDG, came from Z. Pallo Jordan, Minister, Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa



Marine Stewardship Council

# Open and transparent

**The certification procedure of the MSC initiative seeks to involve the many and different stakeholders in fisheries**

I refer to the article by Brian O’Riordan entitled ‘Who’s Being Seduced?’, which appeared in the July issue of SAMUDRA. I would like to clarify a number of points related to the MSC certification which is currently still being developed.

Firstly, I was happy to see that Brian’s article began on a positive note for the MSC. I fully agree with him when he underlines MSC’s potentially valuable contribution towards sustainable fisheries. I was also very pleased to learn that Brian approved of the consultation process which we are currently undertaking and I can confirm that the consultation process is both open and transparent. We are doing our utmost to get as many stakeholders around the world involved in designing the MSC certification programme.

In addition, we are currently field-testing the Marine Stewardship Council’s proposed certification system in various fisheries settings. These test cases include small-scale fisheries as well as fisheries in the developing world. We hope that these test cases will provide valuable information on the MSC’s Principles and Criteria and the certification methodology, and will help guide future development. These test cases should provide information on the costs of certification, the feasibility of the proposed standard and methodology in a real fisheries setting and also highlight how the certifiers work in this sector, which is new to most of them. Our resources are, of course, not unlimited, so we do our utmost to get the best value for the money that has been allocated for the development of the MSC.

There are various reasons why ecolabelling systems (by no means confined to the proposed MSC

certification) have taken off in recent years. One very important aspect of ecolabelling is that, when applied on a voluntary basis, they are market-neutral and non-discriminatory. In this respect, it should be noted that the success of a voluntary scheme, as is the case for the MSC, will, at the end of the day, be judged by the level of take-up from industry.

The voluntary nature of the MSC scheme ensures that it will not be ‘imposed’ on anyone. Rather, the consumers (final or intermediate) are being alerted to the environmental consequences of their consumption. This is an attempt to address the devastating effects that consumption from certain fisheries may have. In this way, the proposal that “the North should rather be questioning and regulating its own patterns of consumption” is definitely very much in line with MSC thinking, but by means of a voluntary scheme rather than one which is ‘regulated’.

Brian’s article notes that privatized fisheries (e.g. ITQs) will be easier to certify. At present, there is no evidence to substantiate this proposition nor is there any intention to discriminate against any particular fisheries management system. The test cases mentioned above may, however, shed some light on these issues.

## Global applicability

The global applicability or equivalence of a scheme like the MSC’s is vital. For a better understanding of how this can be achieved with a general set of principles and criteria (or standards) against which certification takes place, it should be remembered that the relative importance of indicators (measures for each of the principles and criteria) will be fisheries-specific. That is why we have consistently stressed that the certification



Response

procedure/methodology is at least as important as the set of principles and criteria which, unfortunately, seems to be what attracts most attention.

means of ensuring socially and economically acceptable outcomes for those who rely on fishing and by the same token, also the future of the resource. 3

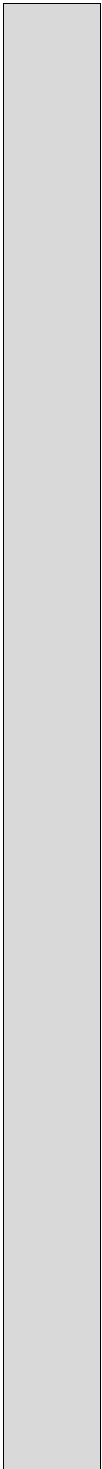
Contrary to ‘normal’ certifications where the measurements are fairly straight forward and can be addressed as a set of yes/no questions and answers, certification as proposed by the MSC will be less straightforward.

Under the MSC system, the certification companies will set up certification teams, which will consist of people with relevant knowledge about the local/regional fisheries situation and have the ‘approval’ of stake holder groups. This will ensure the credibility of the certification outcome and that the certification process will take into account the local/regional fisheries conditions and settings.

Let me finally mention that the latest OECD fisheries publication, ‘Towards Sustainable Fisheries’, which, *inter alia* analyses community-based fisheries management systems, comes to a very positive conclusion with respect to achieving sustainability objectives through such schemes.

In fact, in the many fisheries meetings and discussions I have attended in recent years, co-management and community-based systems are often highlighted as being among the best

This letter, written by Carl-Christian Schmidt, Project Manager of the Marine Stewardship Council, was addressed to Sebastian Mathew, Executive Secretary of ICSF, with a copy to Brian O’Riordan of ITDG



Marine Stewardship Council

# An appeal for co-operation

**The Marine Stewardship Council initiative will succeed only if it enlists the support of the wide array of stakeholders in fisheries**

I received your note on my return from Cape Town, where we held the seventh in our first round of regional workshops on the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The discussion there was most interesting, especially from the perspective of native South African fishers represented by the Informal Fisheries Association. They felt that the MSC, by promoting socially responsible fisheries, would help them advance the interests of small-scale, local fishers who have heretofore been disenfranchised by the South African government. Fishworkers in other parts of the world have had a similar reaction to the MSC.

With that in mind, I have to say that I've been very disappointed in your apparent unwillingness to help us develop the MSC with the interests of fishworkers at heart. ICSF seems to believe that any market-based mechanism such as the MSC will necessarily favour large-scale, Northern fisheries and their sophisticated management systems. You seem to have concluded that the MSC will work against the interests of small-scale fishers, especially in the developing world. The fact that Unilever, one of the world's leading buyers of fish, and other key industry players are co-operating in the development of the MSC seems only to have deepened your mistrust.

My mission is to turn that thinking on its head and persuade you that the MSC is worthy not only of your trust but your active participation. Let me start by making a few salient points about the evolution of the MSC in relation to the fisheries work of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

1. In 1995, WWF launched the Endangered Seas Campaign in response to the accelerating decline of marine fisheries

around the world. Our goal is to reverse the effects of unsustainable fishing on marine fish and the environment on which they depend. One of our targets is to build powerful social and economic incentives for sustainable fishing that will complement existing regulatory regimes.

2. We recognized early on that the rich fishery resources of developing countries are increasingly under threat from the distant-water fleets of Northern, developed States. The FAO reported earlier this year that "in most low-income food-deficit countries, production has changed little over recent years, and, in some of them, it has dropped considerably." As you know, a leading cause of this decline has been the, activity of offshore fleets that compete with local fishers for dwindling resources.

3. To make matters worse, many Northern governments heavily subsidize their fishing fleets. This is particularly true of the European Union. Having long since overfished their own waters, these countries export their excess fishing capacity to the waters of some of the world's poorest nations. That Northern governments subsidize overfishing in developing countries is one of the most scandalous aspects of modern fisheries.

## Number of fronts

4. WWF is addressing unsustainable fishing on a number of fronts: in our field and policy work, and in both public and private sectors. Our field offices around the world are focusing more and more on fisheries and the marine environment. For example, last week our affiliate in Thailand (Wildlife Fund Thailand) issued a call for action in the shooting death of an official of the Small-Scale Fishermen's Network of Phang Nga Bay by the crew of an offshore trawler.

There are many similar examples of our work on behalf of local communities from our field offices around the world.

5. Meanwhile, we are working in the public policy sector to eliminate or redirect the subsidies that send the wrong economic signals to world fisheries. We recently published a report entitled 'Subsidies and the Depletion of World Fisheries' that highlights this problem. Among the four case studies in the report is one by Gareth Porter of the World Bank featuring the impacts of EU fisheries agreements with African States. We released this report in early June at a joint news conference and workshop in Geneva co-sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme. The conclusions of the workshop and the publicity surrounding the WWF report stimulated tremendous interest and controversy around the world.

6. The debate over subsidies was particularly intense in Brussels. Gareth Porter and Scott Burns (editor of the WWF report) briefed senior EU officials there last month and also met with Brian O'Riordan and Coalition for Fair Fisheries Agreements (CFFA). The European Commission was quick to defend its record of spending more than one-third of the EU's annual fisheries budget securing access for European fleets to the waters of developing countries. Ironically, in the

month following the release of our report, the EU announced the renewal of fisheries agreements with three west African countries (Guinea-Bissau, Cote d'Ivoire and Cape Verde). In each case, the agreements provided for an increase in the number of EU vessels allowed to fish in the waters of these developing nations. We're planning a follow-up report for early next year.

7. In addition to our work on subsidies and other issues in the public sector, WWF is increasingly working on complementary initiatives in the private sector. We launched the MSC in 1996 as a private sector partnership to promote the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries. The MSC represents an innovative new approach designed to create powerful economic incentives for sustainable fishing by harnessing market forces and the power of consumer choice. Through independent, third-party certification of fisheries and labelling of seafood products, the MSC will give consumers the ability to choose products from sustainable sources. For the first time, both corporate and individual seafood buyers will be able to identify and select products from well-managed, sustainable fisheries.

**Independent organization**

8. The MSC was established as an independent organization in February 1997. Its stated mission is "to work for



sustainable marine fisheries by promoting responsible, environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable fisheries practices, while maintaining the biodiversity, productivity and ecological processes of the marine environment.”

**F**rom the outset, we recognized the importance of the ‘socially responsible’ element of that mission statement. Accordingly, we invited social scientists and experts on Southern fisheries, such as Daniel Pauly, Bob Johannes, Madeleine Hall-Arber and Matt Gianni, to a workshop in September 1996 to draft the principles and criteria for sustainable fishing that will eventually underpin the MSC. The resulting draft contains five principles, one of which deals explicitly with social issues in fisheries. We need your help to improve on the original draft.

9. To enhance the transparency of the MSC, we have held a series of formal and informal consultations around the world since last year. These workshops and meetings have given us invaluable feedback on a number of issues, especially the draft principles and criteria. The workshops allow us to - interact with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds.

While newsletters (of which the MSC has published three) and websites are a

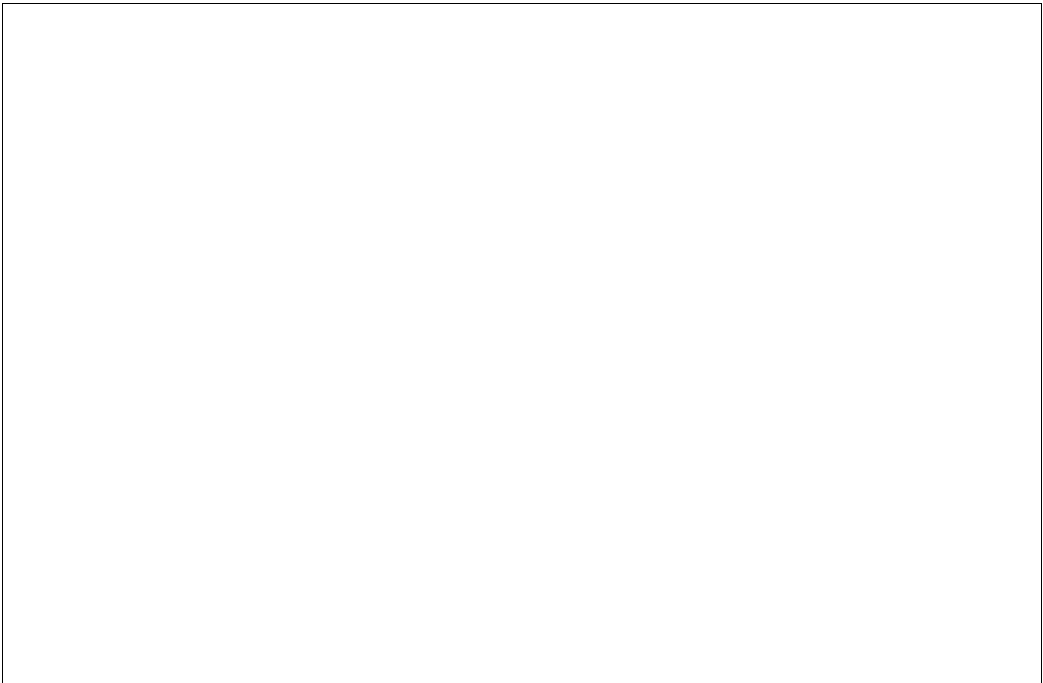
valuable means to disseminate information, we’ve found there is no substitute for face-to-face meetings and workshops where perspectives and ideas can be freely exchanged.

10. One of our foremost concerns has been the potential impact of the MSC on small-scale fishers and fisheries in developing countries. According to the FAO, products from fisheries in the developing world are increasingly being exported to Northern markets. That being the case, market mechanisms like the MSC have the potential to help promote more sustainable fishing practices in both the North and South alike.

In fact, certification under the auspices of the MSC could actually result in a market advantage for Southern fisheries over their Northern counterparts. After all, most of the spectacular collapses of fisheries have occurred in the North, not the South! For example, certification could provide a competitive edge for coastal fisheries over rival distant-water fleets operating offshore. This aspect of the MSC needs to be more fully explored in discussions with ICSF members.

#### Level playing ground

11. The MSC workshops have emphasized the need to make certification available to all fisheries around the world on an equal basis. Global equivalency—or a ‘level playing field’—will not only be extremely



important for the success of the MSC, but is also a legal requirement under the rules of the World Trade Organization.

**T**he World Bank and a number of bilateral aid agencies have already demonstrated their willingness to provide support to allow small-scale operators in the developing world to become certified under the auspices of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). Frankly, we believe more small-scale fisheries are likely to qualify for initial certification than large-scale enterprises. This has certainly been the experience of the FSC, which has overseen the certification of far more hectares of well-managed forest in developing countries than in Northern, developed States. In the North, small-scale forest operators have banded together in co-operatives and sought certification together, sometimes assisted by their governments. We believe the same is likely to happen in small-scale, Northern fisheries.

12. In any case, we must ensure that the MSC is shaped so that it favours sustainable, small-scale fisheries, especially those in developing countries. To facilitate this, WWF and the MSC are planning a series of formal and informal consultations in the developing world during 1997-98. We have received a small grant from a Swiss-based charitable foundation for the expansion of the MSC in Latin America. However, we will need to reach out to Africa and especially Asia and the Pacific as well. We need your help to ensure that we reach the appropriate stakeholders in each region. That's why, for example, we have sought to schedule a workshop in conjunction with the ICSF meeting in February.

13. Another subject on which we need your input is the proposed governance of the MSC itself. As you know, we were originally advised to choose a non-membership model, with a board of directors and a consultative forum to ensure sufficient representation and inclusiveness of all stakeholders.

This has been the subject of intense discussion at each MSC workshop, and we have received excellent advice on how the MSC should be governed. For example,

most workshop participants have advised that the MSC board should NOT be representative or expertise-based, but should be composed of individuals of the highest possible integrity, credibility and 'statesmanship' who are committed to the cause of fisheries conservation. We need your feedback and that of your members on the proposed governance model as well.

14. Finally, I'm pleased to report that support for the MSC is growing among all stakeholder groups. To date, dozens of stakeholder organizations have registered their support, including NGOs, fish processors, retailers, fishers' groups, academic institutions and government research institutions. Influencing the behaviour of industry is obviously key to any market-led initiative like the MSC.

Without their support, we're simply trying to influence the market from outside. And if we're successful in changing the way industry does business, we could have an enormous effect on world fisheries.

Our challenge is to establish the most rigorous, defensible certification and labelling system possible, and then let it go to work. Frankly, I'm happy to have the support of progressive elements of industry in the MSC initiative. We must not allow the involvement of multinationals like Unilever in the MSC scare us away from a process that will lead to fundamental reform of an industry! That industry is involved is all the more reason that NGOs like WWF and ICSF must be part of the initiative, to help ensure that the emerging organization addresses the issues that we believe are most important. In the long run, that's the only way we can guarantee its credibility and success.

I believe ICSF has done itself and the MSC a great disservice by refusing to actively engage in the development of the organization. So far, you've rebuffed our efforts to schedule a workshop in conjunction with an ICSF event such as your triennial meeting.

#### Misconceptions

The articles in SAMUDRA have been full of rhetoric and misconceptions that reflect a lack of information and understanding


about the MSC. Magazine articles represent one-way communication and don't amount to constructive engagement. In the spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation, may I suggest an alternative course of action?

**F**irst, by all means continue the debate in SAMUDRA. But don't believe that this alone amounts to effective consultation! You are most welcome to print any or all of this message in the magazine, as you wish.

Second, work with us to schedule a workshop on the MSC in conjunction with the ICSF triennial meeting in February or another appropriate gathering.

We're committed to reaching out to small-scale fishers and fishworkers around the world. But we don't have an unlimited budget and can't visit every country. A workshop in conjunction meeting would allow us to reach many more stakeholders than we could otherwise.

Finally, consider serving on the board or consultative forum of the MSC when they are established some time later this year or early next year. That way, you'll have a voice in the governance and development of the MSC. And the MSC will have the benefit of your input and perspective on fisheries around the world.

I hope that this note has helped clear the way for a more positive and active role for ICSF in the development of the MSC. If the MSC evolves in a manner that does not take the perspective of small-scale fishers and those in developing countries into account, you and I will have only ourselves to hold accountable. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can provide any further information. I look forward to hearing from you soon. 

This letter was written by Michael Sutton, Director, Endangered Seas Campaign, WWF International

# When sandals meet suits

**As it exists, the Marine Stewardship Council initiative is not sufficiently inclusive of Southern stakeholders**

I would like to express, on behalf of ICSF, our wholehearted appreciation of the painstaking efforts you have obviously made in drafting your memorandum. It is the first time that we have received a substantive response from you to some of the issues raised in SAMUDRA Report on the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). It is an important gesture towards greater transparency, and we will do our best to respond to the arguments you have used to try and convince ICSF to participate in the MSC process.

At the outset, it is a pity that we do not have a copy of the draft Principles and Criteria of the MSC. We would appreciate if you could send us a copy. We would also like to receive copies of reports of all the seven MSC workshops that you mention in your letter so that we could have a better picture of the debates at these meetings. We would also be grateful if you could send us a list of participants at these workshops. We would further like to receive copies of the studies on subsidies, especially Gareth Porter's study on the impacts of EU fisheries agreements.

It is interesting to hear that fishworkers in several parts of the world consider the MSC to be advancing their interests. We are keen to know more about these fishers' groups. Are they from the industrial sector or from the small-scale sector? Among the groups of fishworkers we know in the North, small-scale fishers in Brittany, France and the Maritimes, Canada, harbour reservations about the Marine Stewardship Council.

The latter, in particular have strong misgivings. International union representing fishermen, like the International Transport Workers' Federation, also have strong reservations,

if we take into consideration their interventions at the 1997 FAO's Committee on Fisheries meeting in Rome.

Now, to respond to your letter more specifically, we have the following comments to offer. On Point 1, we appreciate the target to build powerful social and economic incentives for sustainable fishing but would that not be contingent upon having fisheries mainly catering to the export market, especially of those countries that are interested in sourcing the MSC-certified fish?

Even if about 50 per cent of the quantity of global exports of fish and fish products comes from the developing countries, one-third of it comprises fishmeal which is entirely based on industrial production. Most of the fish produced in the artisanal and small-scale sector in many developing countries is sold in the domestic market and the MSC could be of little relevance in such markets. For instance, in the case of China and India—the most populous countries in Asia—less than 10 per cent of their aggregate marine fish production enters the world market.

Further, proper management of small-scale Southern marine fisheries requires an active State, and significant financial and human resources, rather than just a market label.

**Management costs**

The management costs of small-scale fisheries, which either need to be borne by governments or the producers, save in exceptional circumstances, will be significantly higher than those of industrial fisheries (this is true of both the North and the South) for the reasons that (a) numerous people are involved in the artisanal and small-scale fisheries; (b) the



fish landing centres are far too many; and (c) the diversity of species and fishing operations is far too great.

**P**oint 2 is valid. But how could the MSC initiative prevent foreign fishing vessels from operating in the waters of developing countries if the distant-water fleets are fishing in a responsible manner?

They could be using selective fishing gear and techniques, employing legally recruited workers and be complying with international minimum standards.

Because of their responsible fishing practices, they could very well be rewarded by a labelling scheme, such as the MSC, even if their fishing activities have a negative impact on the livelihood rights of the artisanal fishers of the South: Senegal is an example.

In other words, the ecolabelling programme may be in a position to be instrumental in ensuring compliance with conservation and social principles by the distant-water fleets, but it may not be in a position to remove the social inequity perpetrated by the same fleets on the artisanal fishing communities.

Perhaps the same argument would hold true for industrial and artisanal fisheries as well. As Michael Belliveau, citing the example of the herring fishery of *Canada*,

has pointed out in his article in SAMUDRA, Report No. 15, just because they have been fishing within the parameters of responsible fishing, large purse-seiners catching herring in the Atlantic would qualify for the MSC ecolabel, even though they have displaced inshore fishers from their traditional fishing grounds.

In Point 3, are you implying that industrial fleets subsidized by the Northern countries will be penalized by the MSC? If this is practicable, it is certainly welcome. It is good to hear about the WWF report on 'Subsidies and the Depletion of World Fisheries' and that the study generated a lot of interest and controversy around the world. In this context, we would like to point out that while we are opposed to all forms of subsidies to the industrial sector worldwide, certain kinds of subsidies to the artisanal and small-scale fishworkers may be essential for ensuring the livelihood of fishers in many developing countries.

As for Point 8, we are happy to note that the MSC had recognized the importance of "socially responsible" fisheries from the outset.

**South not consulted**

But it is unfortunate that despite this recognition, stakeholders from the South *have not*, till date, been involved in the drafting of criteria and principles to underpin the MSC.

**T**he concept of socially responsible fisheries—as the MSC Newsletter No. 2 mentions on the first page—seems to refer to fisheries that respect local law and that are undertaken by legally employed crew who enjoy international minimum standards. If this is the definition, perhaps it is applicable to industrial fisheries rather than to small-scale or artisanal fisheries. In the latter case, there is often no legal contract of employment and the recruitment of fishers is from the informal labour market, and often based on kinship. Moreover, the ILO conventions and recommendations do not apply to the artisanal and small-scale sector (a situation long overdue for change!).

If, by promoting socially responsible fisheries, the MSC would help advance the interests of small-scale fishers, it is most welcome. But isn't it too early to say if that is going to happen? ICSF believes that market-based mechanisms, such as ecolabelling, could be useful, but we would like to have a better understanding of how these mechanisms can work for the interests of small-scale fishers, especially in the developing world. We would like to see how local specificities are taken into consideration while developing an ecolabel. We would also like to see *more* examples of small-scale and local fishers benefiting from market-based mechanisms, before endorsing an ecolabelling initiative such as the MSC.

On Point 10, you are right that products from fisheries in the South are increasingly being exported to Northern markets. We do not, however, quite agree with your observation that "certification under the auspices of the MSC could actually result in a market advantage for Southern fisheries over their Northern counterparts."

The higher prices that consumers pay for the MSC ecolabel may not translate into higher incomes for the fishers, as John Kurien observes in his article in SAMUDRA Report No. 15. As he further observes, small-scale fishers in developing countries are likely to lose their autonomy with respect to the patterns of harvesting and disposal of their catch in the foreign market, as decisions pertaining to terms of harvesting and levels of prices will be

dictated by purchasers abroad. In some developing countries, this may be seen as new forms of colonialism and may even have unpleasant consequences.

We also have problems with the reference to collapsed fisheries. Once a fishery has collapsed, there is little fish around to be either caught or sold. The Newfoundland cod fishery is a good example of how the MSC could have failed because, on the basis of scientific assessments at that time, the cod might have obtained the label until shortly before its collapse, when it would have, in any case, been too late for the fishery to benefit from the MSC label! This point is made by Michael Belliveau in SAMUDRA Report No. 15. As he further mentions in his piece, if ecolabelling is to be based on the current state of scientific knowledge, it is no guarantee for a sustainable fishery.

The first sentence of Point ii is an interesting objective, but we feel that the stated "equal basis" is very ambitious. "Global equivalency" could very well remain a theoretical possibility. Also, the costs of ecolabels could be prohibitively high in the South, if you take into consideration the points that we have mentioned above, namely, diversity of species and fishing operations, dispersed landing centres, and the involvement of numerous fishworkers. Moreover, our understanding of WTO rules is that they are not very clear on private ecolabelling initiatives. It may take some time before some clarity emerges on this issue. We would, however, like to know your understanding of WTO rules in relation to this.

The reference to the Forest Stewardship Council would be welcome if you can take it as a basis to analyze the difficulties associated with applying the same concept to marine fisheries. In comparison with forests, the costs of defining and enforcing property rights in capture fisheries, if that ever becomes a criterion in the MSC certifying programme, will be very high and this could significantly influence the outcome of the labelling scheme.

#### Expertise needed

With regard to Point 13, we feel that there is danger if there is no expertise on the MSC

board to monitor the economic and social impacts of the labelling programme and to oversee the scientific aspects of certification. Would it not be difficult to remain credible without expertise?

If the idea is to hire such expertise, how could the MSC guarantee that independent expertise is available to monitor and evaluate the process? Perhaps both ethical and professional considerations should be reflected in the composition of the board.

Would it be possible for us to know the stakeholder organizations who have registered their support with the MSC initiative? Although “influencing the behaviour of the industry is obviously key to any market-led initiative,” would certification not be much more difficult in most marine fisheries than in forestry? Moreover, the MSC certification programme is mainly targeting fish meant for export to the US and European markets. Would it be possible to have islands of well-managed fisheries catering to the export market in the midst of overfished or optimally fished stocks catering to the domestic market?

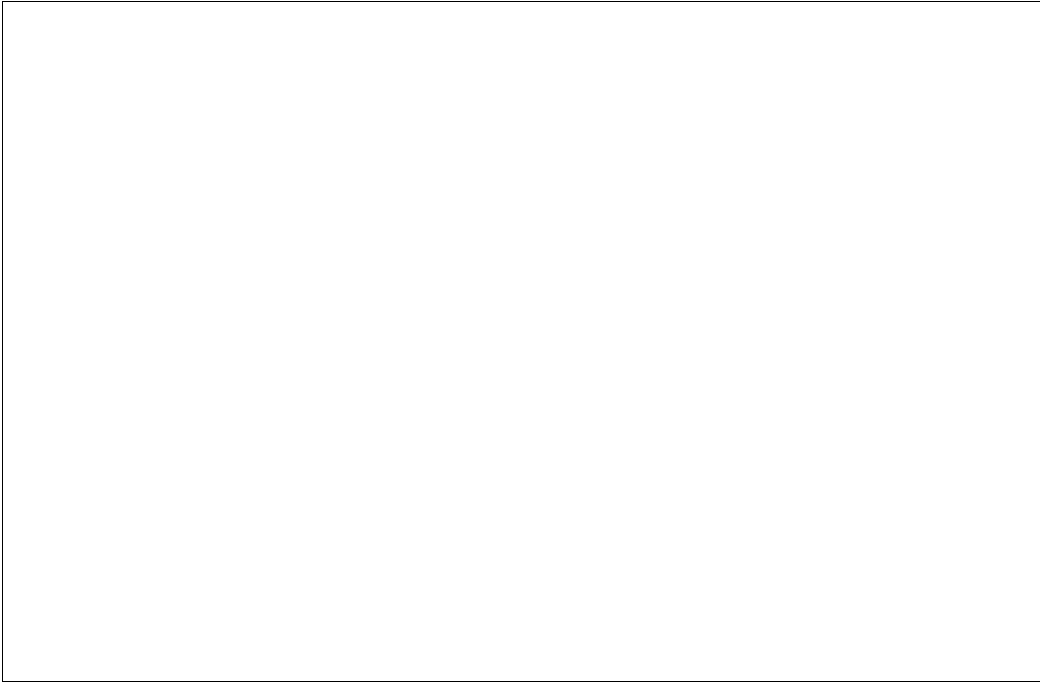
We have indeed, as you have pointed out at the beginning of your letter, got reservations about Unilever’s involvement in the whole process. As we have said before, we would have appreciated the MSC initiative much more

if WWF had avoided the involvement of Unilever in the formulating stages of the initiative. In fact, one of the credibility gaps of the initiative, as far as we are concerned, is in this collaboration of “the sandals and the suits,” as described by a columnist in *The Times*.

We still have reservations about the credibility of a multinational like Unilever which is perhaps interested more in controlling access to fish markets than in sustainable fishing practices. As Alain Le Sann points out in his article in SAMUDRA Report No. 15, fishers could be disenfranchised by the MSC initiative, since multinationals like Unilever are likely to have a decisive impact not only on prices, but also on conditions that determine access to the markets. John Kurien also makes a similar point in his article in SAMUDRA Report (mentioned above). Moreover, since an elegant and universal definition of ‘sustainability’ is almost impossible, the certification programme could impose its criteria for sustainability, which could be in contradiction with the understanding of fishers.

**Apprehensions remain**

We are not yet convinced that the MSC is going to offer a fundamental reform of the fishing industry and we still have apprehensions about the initiative as such. We are also more or less sure that in the ultimate power game there are no



'level playing fields' and that Southern fishworkers are more likely to lose than to benefit from joining the MSC initiative as it is currently being developed. But we would like to be proved wrong in holding this view.

**W**e are sorry to hear that you consider the articles in SAMUDRA Report "full of rhetoric and misconceptions." You might have already noticed that I have used relevant arguments mainly from those articles. We do not think that we are doing us or MSC a disservice by showing reluctance to actively engage in the development of the organization. On the contrary, I think we have spent a considerable amount of our time to reflect on the initiative and to see how it would actually translate into practice, especially in relation to Southern fishworkers.

Given all the problems with MSC as it is envisaged now, perhaps there is no point in organizing a briefing consultation at a meeting where only ICSF members are going to be present. ICSF members are, in any case, not representing the stakeholders in fisheries; they are members of ICSF in their individual capacities.

Unless a workshop on MSC is organized at a more inclusive level with Southern stakeholders, it may not serve its intended purpose. This could be a three-day workshop organized by MSC involving all important stakeholders. You could, as you suggest, have such a meeting in Asia, Africa and Latin America to reform the principles and criteria also from a Southern grass-roots perspective. This would also enable the MSC to get the perspective on sustainability from fishers and their communities.

Alternatively, a meeting with analytical inputs and fair reporting procedures will be welcome with participants from the above continents. This would also meaningfully complement the consultation process that you had with the Northern scientists and other interested parties. In such a meeting, it may also be worthwhile to consider how labelling standards could be applied to brackish water aquaculture and mariculture.

I would like to add that law would like to continue this dialogue with you in good faith and in a spirit of co-operation. Our exchanges, I think, can contribute to a better understanding of ecolabelling issues in marine fisheries in relation to artisanal and small-scale fisheries in the North and the South.

This letter to Michael Sutton, Director, Endangered Seas Campaign, WWF International, dated 7 August 1997, was written by Sebastian Mathew, Executive Secretary, ICSF

## Going by the book

**A recent book on Catalunyan fisheries provides concrete proposals for a rational fisheries policy**

June 1996 saw the publication in Barcelona of the book entitled *La pesca en el siglo XXI: Propuestas para unagestion pesquera racional en Catalunya* (Fishing in the 21st Century: Proposals for Rational Fisheries Management in Catalunya). Written at the initiative of the workers union, this investigative work adopts a multidisciplinary focus to tackle the problems of the fishing sector in this region. The authors belong to diverse fields, all closely related to fishing: Miguel Irazola is a fisherman; Antoni Luchetti, an economist and politician; Antonio Ocana, a journalist and sociologist; Juan Manual Tapia, a trade unionist; and Jordi Lleonart and Sergi Tudela, fisheries biologists.

Their combined effort, through many interviews and sessions with those who actually work in fisheries, allowed precise and realistic proposals to be formulated for a rational and sustainable management of the resources, based on the biological and ecological aspects of the exploited species. The objective was to increase the welfare of fishing-dependent people by improving working and marketing conditions.

Catalunya is an autonomous region in northwestern Spain, beside the Mediterranean. According to 1995 data, the Catalunyan fleet comprises around 1,400 vessels, of which 54 per cent are artisanal or small-scale, 28 per cent, trawlers, 11 per cent, purse-seiners and five per cent, longliners.

The entire fleet fishes in the coastal, waters and returns each day to the base ports. The volume of landings of the fleet in 1993 was 55,000 tonnes, around 40 per cent of the total landings for the Spanish Mediterranean coast. Although the fishing sector has just 5,500 workers and

provides direct employment to only 0.3 per cent of Catalans, its social and traditional significance in certain places and regions is very high. At the same time, the high consumption of fish in Catalunya (25.4 kg per person per year), together with the preference for fresh, high-quality fish, generates a huge demand which can not be met by local production.

This would suggest a favourable situation for the Catalan fishing sector to grow. The reality, however, is quite different. In the first place, the resources are generally seriously overexploited and the fisheries are not managed rationally by the various administrations (European, Spanish and Catalan). In effect, there is no adaptive management system, that is, no routine follow-up is carried out of the state of the fisheries in order to find out how it responds to management measures and to then suggest changes.

At the same time, established management measures are not founded on the existing knowledge of the biology of various species. They are frequently ambiguous or legislatively inconsistent and, more importantly, most of the time they are not carried out. The process of marketing of the fish products does not favour the fishermen but the middlemen. Also, the existing labour system is biased against the crew in favour of the owner.

### Working groups

In order to tackle this problem in the most optimum way, the authors formed two working groups. One looked into the biological and economic aspects, while the other considered the labour and social aspects. Both groups, however, worked closely together with the aim of coming up with harmonious and explicit proposals that would provide solutions. The first issue agreed to be tackled was the

conservation of exploited species, given that the continuity of the sector depended upon their survival.

This could be achieved only through an appropriate management oriented towards the sustainability of fishing in the long term. Although Catalan fisheries, with a few exceptions, are to a greater or lesser extent multi-species, the analysis of the fisheries biologists centred on two principal species landed in Catalunya—anchovies and hake—because it was felt that these adequately represented the larger problems facing fishing in the country.

Anchovies are the main catch of the Catalan purse-seiner fleet, made up of 160 vessels. In 1995 this was the species most caught. The anchovy is a short-lived, small pelagic. It reproduces the year it is born and is susceptible to strong annual population fluctuations. This natural tendency implies that overfishing could lead to the collapse of the fishery. Therefore, the studies concluded, the management of this species should take into account its biology, and a precautionary approach should be adopted as a matter of course.

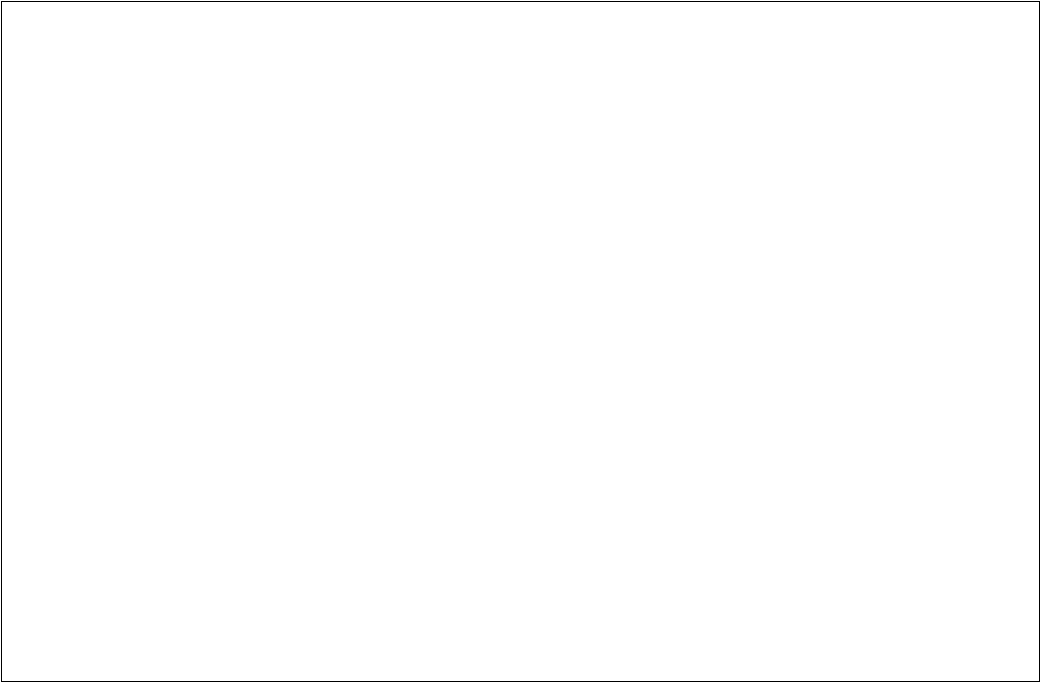
The pressure on this resource grew strongly during the 1980s as a result of the migration to the Catalan coast of part of the south Spanish fleet, following the

collapse of the, anchovy fishery in that area. This caused the Catalan fishery to change from being seasonal and targeting only adult species to operating nearly all year round and catching large amounts of juveniles, despite the fact that they are theoretically protected by law.

Given that the key to conservation of the stock is maximizing the possibility of reproduction to ensure the following year's recruitment to the fishery, the authors of the study recommend that the intensive capture of immature fish should be eliminated. To do so, they proposed that, in the first place, the administration should effectively enforce the technical measures stated in the current legislation, namely, that the minimum capture size be raised to that at sexual maturity (12 cm) and that a subsidized closed season be put into operation during the autumn and winter months in order to avoid the capture of juveniles.

Less selective

The study also points out that purse-seining should be favoured over bottom-trawling which is much less selective with respect to size. Finally, it advocates the continuation of the prohibition of pelagic trawling, used by the fishermen in the south of France, whose over efficiency threatens the conservation of the resource. The most recent data point to an alarming decrease



in recruitment to the stock so much so that the scientists fear a real collapse of the fishery.

If this happens, the fall in fishing income would generate serious social problems because the purse-seiners, with, on average, 10 crew members per boat, employ 55 per cent of the workers in the Catalan fisheries sector. The foreseeable rise in the catches of sardines, more abundant than the anchovy but in less demand in the market, would probably not solve the problem.

As far as hake is concerned, this is one of the main species—in value terms—caught by the Catalan trawl fleet of about 400 vessels. It is also caught by longline, particularly in the north of Catalunya (in the Golfo de Leon). In terms of income generated, hake ranked third among all the species caught in 1995. In contrast to the anchovy, hake is a long-living species that suffers from increasing overfishing. This means that, apart from the excess effort applied to the resource, the fish are being caught in sizes well below those that would allow for a much larger overall output. The trawl fleet is largely responsible for this situation. In effect, most of the fish caught thus are below the minimum legal size (20 cm) which itself is much smaller than the size at sexual maturity (more than 30 cm).

At this level, there is a serious inconsistency in the law because the minimum size of 20 cm, quite apart from not being founded on the biological characteristics of the species, is totally incompatible with the mesh size authorized for trawling (40 mm) with which smaller fish are always caught. Most of the fish caught by longlines are, however, bigger than the size at sexual maturity, since this method is more selective than trawling.

In order to evaluate the efficiency of variations in the means of exploiting the resource, computer simulations were carried out based on real data in the fishery. The results showed that, by combining different methods, such as a decrease in fishing effort of around 20 per cent (one fewer fishing day per week), the modification of the trawl-net to comply with legislation on minimum sizes, and a

reduction of effort in trawling, together with an increase of effort in longlining, the biomass of the stock and the output of the fishery increased significantly in all cases.

However, in all the scenarios considered, the sector would have to pass through a crisis period of a number of years before the improvement became apparent. Thus, for example, the reduction in effort and the increase in the trawl mesh size provoke a medium-term increase in the biomass of the hake by around 140 per cent, and a rise in the output of the trawl and the longline by 50 per cent and 200 per cent respectively. Nonetheless, in general, the output during the first three years is significantly worse. As a result, during this period, government aid would be imperative.

Biological and economic studies show that it is possible to rationally manage the fishery that it is ecologically necessary and economically profitable, and that the only thing needed to achieve it is a political will on the part of the administration. Timely action in the short term should give way to a long-term management approach based on the continuous monitoring of the fisheries—an approach which foresees the elimination of excess fishing effort, the development of more selective gear and the subsidization of closed areas and periods of crisis. The incorporation, with full rights, of the Mediterranean fisheries into the Common Fisheries Policy of the European Union continues to be an important topic in Brussels. But, until that happens, local administrations should seriously assume their responsibilities and respond to the sector's problems.

#### **Fishery management**

As the conclusions that have emerged from the study have shown, together with the improvement in the bio-economic management of the fishery, other organizational and labour aspects need to be urgently revised. In Catalunya, fishermen and vessel owners are organized into 'brotherhoods'. These are civil law bodies that have their roots in the guilds of the Middle Ages and enjoy a territory with exclusive rights given to them. They act as consultative and collaborative administrative bodies, carrying out and controlling the application of their directives and

independently establishing regulations and technical measures on the different fisheries (fishing hours, gear, etc.), which their members are bound to honour.

Unfortunately, they are also known for their considerable intransigence and are frequently controlled by the most influential vessel owners (normally from the trawling sector). The result is that some fishermen get marginalized. Another very important aspect is that they are also involved in the marketing of fish products through auctions in a fish market managed by each brotherhood.

The role of the owners, however, is limited to fishing as much as possible, sending the catch to the market and accepting with resignation the prices set by the whims of the market. This means that the role of the producers is totally passive, as they play no part in the marketing function, thus allowing the numerous middlemen to obtain important benefits at their cost.

Even though the brotherhoods would be the ideal bodies to oversee the necessary change in the marketing practices of the sector, the rigidity of their structures and their manipulation by certain groups of fishermen, to the detriment of others, could present obstacles. Working relations between the skipper (who, in Catalunya, is often the vessel owner) and

the crew is another important aspect that, in the opinion of the authors of the study, should be improved urgently. This system of working, called 'by the share', constitutes a notable exception in the context of current labour law in Spain.

Of the income received from the sale of fish, and after maintenance costs and social security contributions of the fishermen (among other things) have been deducted, the owner keeps 40 or 50 per cent and the rest is shared among the crew. This system is unfair to the workers, and the authors believe that it should be substituted by a mixed system that provides a minimum level of income security through a basic salary that can be complemented by a strong variable component directly related to the catch.

**No unions**

Also, the virtual absence of unions in fishing allows for harsh situations. This absence is explained by the existence in governing bodies of the brotherhoods of the so-called 'social section', made up of fishermen and workers, and the economic section' made up of skippers and owners. In this way, the hours worked are normally 40 to 55 per week, and, in some sectors (trawling and longlining), can exceed 60. These figures contrast with the average hours in other sectors in Spain—38.7 hours in construction, 36.3 in industry, and 36.2 in the service sector.





Spain	
	<div data-bbox="346 976 826 1256"> <p>The study was largely based on interviews with more than 200 workers in the industry and was carried out in the ports. The process allowed for the expression of views of owners and crew on the problems put forward. It also served to highlight the needs of the sector in various areas, especially with regard to professional training.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="346 1288 826 1817"> <p>The final report was presented at meetings during the summer of 1996 in Barcelona and in other fishing locations in Catalunya. Fishermen, scientists, members of the administration and the media, attended. Towards the end of September, the purse-seiners of Barcelona protested under the slogan 'Closed seasons-yes, juveniles-no' to urge the autonomous government to establish a subsidized closed season during the winter in order to avoid the inevitable capture of juvenile fish and thus conserve the resource. These protests were supported by the workers' unions and their claims were based on the conclusions reached in the study.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="346 1848 826 2129"> <p>Although the authorities ignored these protests, the impact of the study reached the Catalan parliament and at the end of March 1997 the authors were required to appear before a parliamentary committee made up of deputies of the principal parties in Spain. Hopefully, the battle of all those fighting for a fisheries management that respects the</p> </div> <div data-bbox="889 976 1373 1069"> <p>environment and improves the living conditions of the workers will be won in the not-too-distant future.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1353 1035 1373 1069">3</div> <div data-bbox="904 1853 1365 2104"> <p>This article, written by Sergi Tudela, marine biologist, Instituto de Ciencias del Mar de Barcelona and co-author of the book mentioned above, was translated by Elizabeth Bennett, MSc Fisheries Management student, University of Portsmouth, England</p> </div>

# An important milestone

**An international seminar on responsible fishing, held in Ceará, Brazil, provoked informed debate**

In the early 1900s, artisanal fishermen in Brazil were enlisted in the navy, against their will, and organized into fishermen's colonies. Until the 1950s, they remained under military domination and were content with some social benefits such as health services and schools for children. This dependency failed to create among the fishermen any desire to organize themselves and make their voices heard. Even as control of the fishermen's colonies was turned over to civilian governments, there was no significant movement to organize.

Only in the 1970s were the first initiatives undertaken to develop civic responsibility by the Catholic Church under the Pastoral Fishermen's Councils. Many young fishermen participated in seminars and courses, and learned about their rights. This was followed in the next decade by the constitution of the National Fishermen's Movement (MONAPE) and the Fishermen's Movement of Ceará (MOPECE).

Despite this awakening, fishermen were hardly taken as serious partners when the time came to discuss fisheries regulations. They were mostly ignored by fisheries authorities and State governments. This started to change due to the threat from illegal fishing by motorboats equipped with diving equipment which invaded areas of artisanal fishermen and decimated lobster stocks. After armed conflicts and murders at sea were ignored by fisheries authorities, the conflicts provoked the fishermen into action such as the protest trip of the S.O.S Sobrevivência in 1993 (see SAMUDRA No. 15, July 1997).

Finally, the Fisheries Committee of the State of Ceará was created with a significant representation of fishermen.

For the first time, their representatives sat at the same table with representatives of the fishing industry, fisheries administrators and scientists.

It was against this background that the International Seminar on Responsible Fishing took place from 5 to 7 September 1997 in Praia das Fontes in the State of Ceará with the collaboration of the International Collective in support of Fishworkers (ICSF). It proved to be an important milestone towards full participation of artisanal fisherfolk in fisheries management.

For the first time, artisanal fishermen from over 20 communities participated in debates with representatives of fisheries authorities, government agencies, universities, technicians, industries and fleet owners, and presented their points of view. The interest of these participants demonstrated that fishermen are finally being accepted as responsible partners in fisheries management and development.

The seminar was an initiative of the Fishermen's Forum, a loose organization of artisanal fishermen, and the NGO, Instituto Terramar, and was made possible by a grant from Jcsv. The presence of one senator, two deputies of the House of Representatives, several State legislators and five mayors of coastal cities was important, as it demonstrated that, finally, politicians are waking up to the fact that fishing is an important industry and that the plight of the over 15,000 fishermen in the State has to be taken seriously.

### Opening session

At the opening session on Friday, 5 September, the 240 delegates filled the main convention hall of the venue. The state of world fisheries and the FAO Code

of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries was dealt with by Antonio Diegues from the University of Sao Paulo and an ICSF member.

**I**n clear and concise language, he explained the serious crisis facing the world's fisheries and the irresponsibility of the fisheries sector and governments which had allowed fishing effort to increase beyond sustainability, and permitted predatory fishing and conflicts at sea to go unchecked, with artisanal fishermen suffering the consequences. He cited the example of Brazil's fisheries management where decisions were generally taken by a restricted group of scientists and fishing industries. The FAO Code of Conduct stresses the need to include small-scale fishermen in the decision-making process.

Chandrika Sharma of ICSF presented the scope of activities of ICSF. A short presentation about coastal management vividly showed that coastal areas in different parts of the world suffer the same pressures from unsustainable development of industry and tourism. Chandrika also talked of the strength of the fishermen's movement in India which has successfully battled joint venture licensing agreements entered into by their government, which could have caused irreparable damage to small-scale fishers in India.

Nathanael Valle from the Josue Castro Centre in Recife, Pernambuco, discussed the state of fisheries in Brazil and showed how little the Brazilian government has implemented Agenda 21 of the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

Lively debates followed each speakers presentation. The round-table discussion, titled 'Mayors of Coastal Cities and the Fisheries Crisis in Ceará tested three mayors, elected in 1996, on their resolve to direct priorities to fishing development.

The lack of interest of elected public officials at federal, State and municipal levels has been one of the main concerns of the Fishermen's Forum.

The discussion showed, however, that there is hope that the state of affairs is changing. All three mayors have concrete objectives for fisheries development and are joining forces with the Federal University's fisheries Department for the implementation of a development plan with the active involvement of fishing communities.

Jose Augusto Negreiro Aragao from IBAMA (Brazilian Institute for Environment) and Geovane Milton de Oliveira from CEPENE (Fisheries Research Institute of the Northeast) presented the Management Plan for Lobster Fisheries.

**T**hey paid special tribute to artisanal fishermen who, through protests and demonstrations, had finally managed to raise awareness within the fisheries sector to look for means to control predatory fishing. The Lobster Management Plan is the first serious attempt to bring some order to the chaos in fisheries in the State of Ceará.

Concluding the seminar's first working day was the presentation by the foremost expert on lobster fisheries in Brazil, Aduino Fonteles Filho of the Ocean Laboratory of the Federal University of Ceará. His conclusion was that responsible fishing is synonymous with rational fishing, while 'underfishing' means incompetence, and overfishing, lack of social responsibility.

Research has to include a diagnosis of the socioeconomic conditions in artisanal fishing communities. Fisheries management and sustainable development of the coastal zone have to be integrated processes, with the participation of all the actors, especially the small-scale fishers, who constitute the majority of fishermen in Brazil.

With the debate moving away from academic and technical subjects towards everyday fisheries problems and community involvement, the fisherfolk took a more active role in the discussions. The second day opened with a round-table discussion and debate on environmental education, with speakers from IBAMA, Instituto Terramar and the Inland Waters Management Department.

The speakers presented their experiences in different coastal and inland water communities. The debate revealed that fishermen and women attach great importance to educational work with adults and children, both in formal and informal education. The high level of adult illiteracy—almost 80 per cent in most communities—is a serious handicap and has to be addressed by the school authorities of coastal communities and fisheries authorities through NGOs working on adult education.

Maureen Larkin from the Cooper Institute, St. Edwards Islands, Canada and Maria Christina Maneschy of the

Federal University of Belem shared the table with three women from local communities who had previously participated in workshops on women in fisheries. Maureen presented some information on ICSF's work with women in fisheries and the work of her institute with women of fishing communities in Canada.

Maria Christina talked about her experiences. The debate centred around the impact of irresponsible fishing on women and on the family, as well as the involvement of women in community affairs and the fishermen's movement.

One debate centred on the real problems of fisheries management which, in the past, had mostly ignored the opinions and anxieties of the fishing communities. The members at the round table represented fisheries authorities, NGOs, fishermen's colonies and three fishing communities.

They traced the problems of predatory fishing of lobster to the total lack of interest on the part of authorities to enforce existing regulations. This has led to serious overfishing and conflicts between artisanal fishermen and the industry-financed illegal fishing fleet. They recounted the murder of fishermen at sea in the late 1980s, the reaction of fishermen and their actions of protest and the pressures on the (ir)responsible public organs.

It became very clear that fisheries management is at a turning point and that only community-based conservation programmes will be able to reverse the decline of lobster and fish catches, and guarantee the success of aquaculture projects in inland waters. In order to ensure the full participation of the fishing communities in the seminar, the organizing committee had come up with a new and successful formula.

#### **Preparatory seminars**

In the two months before the seminar, preparatory seminars were held in five coastal and one inland water communities. The themes of the seminar were debated in the communities with the participation of fishermen, women and young adults, moderated by volunteers from IBAMA and Instituto Terramar.

The afternoon sessions at the international seminar opened with two videos which had been taken during the preparatory seminars to show the audience the methodology used and to bring them closer to the community problems. During the next two sessions, on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, the community representatives, with a mix of fishermen, community leaders, women and young adults, presented the results of the preparatory seminars and their conclusions. For many, it was the first time they were presenting their ideas before an audience of over 200 specialists, academics and fisheries students.

The proposals presented by the groups showed the strong commitment to participate in the reversal of the chaotic situation in Ceará's fisheries, and demonstrated also the resolve to participate as active partners in fisheries management. There was heavy criticism of fisheries authorities for the inefficiency, corruption and lack of means of law enforcement. The political interference in administration of fishery policies and regulations was pointed out as a serious problem that prevents continuity in fishery conservation programmes.

But the speakers were fair enough to point out their own irresponsibility, resulting from ignorance and the incentives given by lobster buyers in

landing an ever-increasing amount of juveniles. Many of the proposals presented by the communities were incorporated into the final document of the conference.

The groups also showed the commitment to work for greater unity between fishermen and their communities in order to form a strong fishermen's movement which represents small-scale fishermen and to guarantee their participation in fisheries management and fisheries development.

At the closing session on Sunday morning, the Senator Lucio Alcantara from the State of Ceará talked of the law that is being discussed in Congress and which will punish predatory fishing and other environmental crimes with heavy fines and jail sentences.

The Senator, who defended the new law proposed by the executive in 1991 in the Senate, warned of strong pressure from the CNI (National Federation of Industries) against the approval of the law in the lower Chamber of Congress (House of Representatives) and called on the fishing sector to start lobbying members of Congress.

**Partnership needed**

He agreed with the fishermen's position that the serious problems of fisheries in Ceará and Brazil have to be tackled

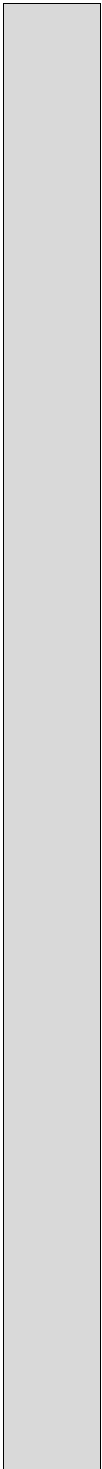


through a partnership of all segments involved in fishing.

Three fisheries delegates from Mozambique, who participated in the seminar, provided some interesting insights into fisheries management in their country. The management measures appeared much more advanced, and implemented with full community participation.

The organizing committee presented the Beberibe Declaration on Responsible Fisheries for approval by the delegates of the conference. The seminar ended with the unanimous approval of the document.

When the delegates from the fishing communities, over 100, travelled back to their villages, some of them 500 km away, there seemed to be some certainty that a new era had begun and that this first participation in the democratic process will contribute to a more sustainable fishery, *se Deus quiser* (if God permits). 3



This report has been prepared by the Instituto Terramar de Pesquisa e Assessoria a Pesca Artesanal, Ceará, Brazil

## Resource management

## Whose paradise?

**There are some lessons to be learnt from the Philippines' oldest experiment in community-based coastal resource management**

**T**he Philippines is blessed with 7,000 islands and there is certainly one among them to suit most dreams. Mine is Apo Island, which has a stunning underwater world. Apo is a small volcanic island near the southeast coast of Negros, one of the main islands in the Visayan region. Apo Island is where, in the late 1970s, the Siliman University started its first experiments with community-based coastal resource management. Apo Island has one of the earliest marine sanctuaries in the Philippines' contemporary history, set up in 1985.

The simplest way to go to the island is to sit on the beach and wait until enough people have gathered to fill a motorized *banca*. The locals are always happy when some tourists travel with them, because then they do not have to pay for the trip. The women enter first, while the men push the boat from the shore into the sea. We sit in twos, densely packed atop the luggage hold. Soon we enter the swell and waves splash high. Within a short while, we are soaked. Our gaze is fixed to the pitch-black rock with the green toupee, which is slowly looming nearer.

We land on the beach and walk into the village. The village is small and densely built. The people greet us in a friendly way. Fewer than a hundred families live on the island, all of whom are related to one another. Most of them are fisherfolk and poor.

We look for Damian, who is the caretaker of a small cottage owned by a doctor from the mainland. The cottage is more of a dusty cabin than a holiday home! but it is near the sanctuary and so, every morning, we can just step out and dive into the sea to enjoy the beautiful underwater world. As the water is crystal

clear, we need to use only a mask and snorkel. The magnificent colours underwater and large variety of corals and the fish make us almost breathless. We join a shoal of silver, shining skipjacks swimming in large circles as if they were doing their morning exercises. We play with the curious, bright orange clownfish and are given a sudden fright when a long seasnake ascends from the depths for a breath of air.

Damian often passes by the cottage to see if we are alright, but mostly for a good chat. Damian is a retired fisherman, who for many years, had worked on Indonesian deep-sea trawlers to earn a living. He was thus able to save some money to educate his children. One of his daughters now works as a customs officer and sends him money every month. Once his daughter got employed, Damian could retire to enjoy his old days. "Those days on the trawlers were hard times, always wet, always cold, always full of work", Damian told us, appearing still filled with horror.

Like his fellow islanders, Damian is very proud of their sanctuary. The environmental awareness programmes of the Siliman University had certainly borne good fruit, and all fisher families, who are organized in a Marine Management Committee, support their sanctuary and serve as voluntary wardens.

### Darker side

But there is also a darker side to the Apo Island success story. After the marine sanctuary was established, the fisher community lost access to a large part of the traditional fishing grounds. There was practically no alternative employment avenue for the generally poorly educated islanders, except as workers on deep-sea trawlers or as housemaids on the

mainland. The rocky island also offers few opportunities for agriculture.

In the early days, there was some development in tourism, but the visitors were primarily marine biologists and a lone adventurer. But Apo Island has recently been discovered by the luxury tourist business. On a shining white beach, surrounded by coal-black rocks and bordered by a sea of various hues of blue, an Australian has built a luxurious beach resort. It is constructed entirely of natural materials, such as hardwood, bamboo and nipa, and in the traditional Filipino style of architecture. A second resort is being built by a Britisher.

Since there are no other eating places on the island, we went to the resort for dinner. The resort was fully booked. The guests were wealthy Filipino youths who had come here as part of some ecotourism club, but the plastic bottles and candy wrappers which they left strewn around everywhere showed their true colours.

On Sunday, a large cruise ship with foreign tourists had dropped anchor in front of the village. Within minutes, the peace was shattered by the piercing sounds of water scooters. Boats from the ship transported tourists, equipped with complete diving equipment, to and from the sanctuary. In the meantime, boats with tourists from other ships run by dive operators also arrived. It became a real

traffic jam near the sanctuary and a real fright for us simple snorkellers.

While, previously, we had peacefully swum with the fish, as one with them, now the fish were chased in all directions by the lights of underwater video and still cameras. Sometimes we saw a diver pocket a live shell or break off a piece of coral to take back as souvenirs. Both these acts are officially prohibited.

Meanwhile, boats had come from the cruise ship to bring a picnicking party ashore. Lounge chairs and parasols were arranged on the beach and food laid on tables. At the side, women from the fisher community had installed themselves in a disciplined line, displaying their merchandise, mostly T-shirts printed with dolphins or sharks and slogans like 'Apo Island', 'Diver's Paradise' and 'Shark Attack'. But the tourists just lay on the lounge chairs and practically ignored the women. The women had no aggressive selling tactics and I wondered how much these poor women would earn from this business.

**Few benefits**

"How do the islanders benefit from this type of tourism?," we asked Jeffrey, a US Peace Corps volunteer who works on the island. "Not very much," he answered. "It is mostly dive operators and hotels from the mainland who bring loads of tourists. They bring everything with them and do



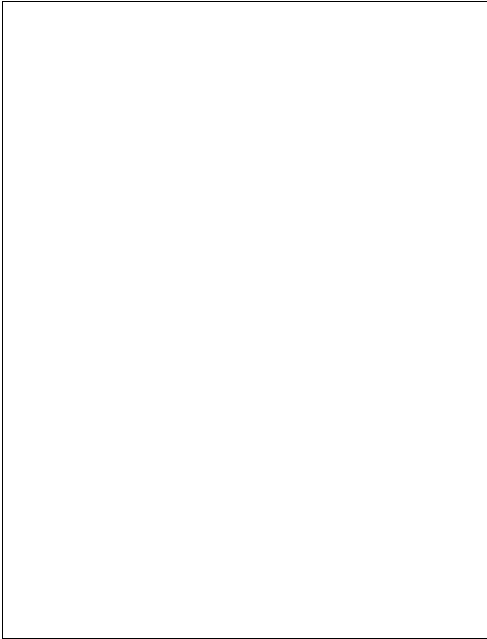


not even pay an entrance fee. The resort pays tax, but to the municipality and not to the islanders (Apo belongs to the municipality of Dauin on the mainland) and, as such, the money disappears into a big pool.”

**H**e also said that even though most families have been living here *for* generations, they are actually squatters’ as they have no title deeds to the land. The growth in tourism had led to speculation, as entrepreneurs from the mainland started buying tax certificates, which are *de facto* land titles and can be used to obtain legal titles. Fortunately, in 1995, Apo Island was declared a protected area by the Department of Environment and Natural resources (DENR) and this will prevent further selling and transfer of land. The DENR also recently started meeting with the dive operators to get them to abide by the environmental rules and regulations of the sanctuary. Some did promise to co-operate and also pay an entrance fee to the islanders Marine Management Committee.

We realized that had the Siliman University helped the islanders to develop the tourism business by themselves, the islanders might have benefitted more. (The university organized only mat weaving training as an alternative income-generating programme, but it was not very successful.) The islanders could have then decided themselves how to direct the development of tourism.

When we spoke to some of the islanders, particularly the women T-shirt sellers, many of them did express concern about the development of tourism on their island. They said that the tourists did not respect their culture. Some islanders complained about nude sunbathing. Women disclosed that they have more work now and less income. After the sanctuary was established, they were no longer permitted to collect shells. Earlier, that was their major source of income. Most of those who work as sea wardens of the sanctuary are women, but the work is voluntary and not paid. All of them, however, said that they are very proud of their sanctuary and all the publicity and attention it has received.



When we went for our last dinner in the luxury resort, the Filipino yuppies had left and we were alone with the dogs. In front of us the lit cruise ship looked like a luminous Christmas tree. We heard music drifting up. After a while, the ship weighed anchor and, slowly, the mass of light disappeared from sight. For a moment, we thought we were the only tourists on the island. But soon, a new light arose from the sea. A motor boat landed on the beach and dark figures in diving suits, carrying bright shining torches, came ashore. A new group of tourists had returned from their nightly diving adventure. “Even at night the fish are not left in peace,” I mused.

**Goodbye**

Early on Monday morning, Damian came to take us to his cousin’s boat, which would transport us back to the mainland. Once again, we mixed with the islanders going to and fin fro for their shopping and trade. And back we went to the rich and stressful city life, refreshed and relaxed by the gifts of Apo Island and its people. But what do we have to give them in return.❧

This piece is by Cornelie Quist, who works with the Netherlands Development Organization (SNV) and advises on the SNV CB-CRM support programme

# Living the fishing

The following is the preface to *A Livelihood from Fishing: Globalization and Sustainable Fisheries Policies* by Alain Le Sann

The period of the last five decades has been characterized by staggering technological and social progress for mankind. Nonetheless, the irrefutable fact is that the world is in a sorry state. Human misery and hunger, which should have been abolished in this modern era of medical advancement, have only spread to affect more and more of the world's populations.

It is in this context that the issue of how oceans ought to feature as a source of food for mankind assumes importance. Will mankind be looking seawards to solve the food security problems of the 21st Century? The question is particularly relevant since nutritional needs are set to grow along with the world population, which is estimated to be six billion in 2000, and predicted to pass nine billion in 2050.

Furthermore, agricultural production will almost certainly reach a plateau or even decline, as a result of deterioration of the soil and continuing deforestation all around the world.

There is an enormous discrepancy between the North and the South in the consumption of seafood—27 kg per person per year in the North, compared to 9 kg per person per year in the South. This cannot be explained solely by the superior biological fertility of coastal waters off the developed countries. The discrepancy, as the authors of this book argue, is, above all, due to the fact that the underdevelopment and indebtedness of Southern countries oblige them to forego part of their own fish supply.

While, overall, production from fisheries and aquaculture has grown enormously over recent years in the South, the produce has increasingly been exported to earn foreign currency. The net result is that supplies have gone to the more industrialized regions of the world, where demand is continually on the rise. They have not gone to serve the nutritional needs of local populations. In other words, ocean resources are benefiting populations which already enjoy high levels of food intake, rather than those, which are short of protein.

Simultaneously, another anomaly can be observed the mismanagement of fisheries resources, including fish, molluscs and shellfish, whose nutritional value is unanimously acknowledged. It is an unpalatable and immoral fact that a third of all fish catches (about 30 million tonnes) is destined not to feed humans, but to fatten livestock (poultry, cattle, pigs, salmon, shrimps, and so on). Not only is this utterly wasteful, it is biologically nonsensical.

**Absurd practices**  
Similarly absurd is the fact that tens of millions of tonnes of fish and other marine animals are thrown back into the sea from fishing vessels just because nothing has been done to sell them. Hundreds of shrimp trawlers work to supply the dining tables of a few rich countries while, out at sea, other fish (the so-called by-catches) are discarded just a few miles away from the African or Asian coasts. At the same time, nearly one billion men, women and children struggle on in poverty and hunger.

### ***A Livelihood from Fishing***

A Livelihood from Fishing: Globalization and Sustainable Fisheries Policies, compiled by Alain Le Sann, is published by Intermediate Technology Publications, the publishing arm of the Intermediate Technology Development Group, UK. It contains abroad overview of fisheries and describes for the general reader, in an accessible and lucid style, the social and nutritional issues raised by the modernization of fisheries worldwide. It will be of particular interest to all those concerned with the protection of the marine environment and the Plight of workers in the fisheries sector. Copies can be ordered @ £10.29 (inc. p & p) from Intermediate Technology Publications, 103-105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HH, UK

What about aquaculture, often billed the great hope for aqua-production of the future? This topic is given ample consideration in this book for a very good reason—over the next 20 or 30 years, aquaculture production is predicted to grow to the same level as current production from capture fisheries. Can aquaculture really provide an alternative to wild, capture fishery? We believe that it can, but only if due respect is paid to nature and to the environment. Ominously enough, spurred by speculative interests, most intensive aquaculture units are concentrating on high-value species, such as salmon and shrimps, rather than on producing food to supply those in need. These units simultaneously pose a threat to the biological fertility and quality of the neighbouring environment and coastal waters.


The only sensible way forward is through extensive or perhaps semi-extensive aquaculture, i.e. only systems sensitive to fragile ecosystems. A reduction of investment at all levels is required. Its socioeconomic viability has been clearly demonstrated by China, where, for centuries, the culture of freshwater fish has been successfully integrated into agricultural systems in combination with, for example, pig rearing or rice cultivation.

Ultimately, effective management of the oceans' resources will depend on our ability to organize its exploitation for the

interests and benefit of each and every stakeholder. Classical fishing development strategies, conceived by research bodies and implemented by governments, rarely achieve the objectives. The harsh reality of competition and the yearning for quick, short-term gains inevitably make us continue to behave as though fish stocks and ocean resources are inexhaustible. With advanced methods of capture, mankind has become an even more formidable predator. Our assaults on the hydrosphere have become veritable raids on the world's precious fish stocks. No wonder our seas are overfished—this is the logical outcome of a system which drives shipowners to intensify their fishing effort and to extend their areas of operation without any regard for the medium - or long-term effects on the marine ecosystem.

Clearly, as the authors of this book exhort, codes of good practice which will help define responsible fishing techniques and processes are long overdue. Without such codes, we will continue to endanger our own prospects for survival. Substitute selfishness with solidarity, and short-term carelessness with thoughtful deliberation—that should be the message for the 21st Century.

#### **Highly accessible**

Happily, it is precisely such a message that this book conveys. Designed to unveil the issues in an accessible manner, it draw upon numerous examples to try an answer some of the vexatious questions plaguing the world's fisheries. The oceans and their marine wealth comprise a vulnerable living resource which, as this book powerfully argues, needs to be protected from wastage and greed. 

This preface to *A Livelihood from Fishing* was written by Jean Chaussade, Director of Research, CNRS, University of Nantes

# A new world forum

The following is the Charter of the Interim Arrangement for the Operation of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers

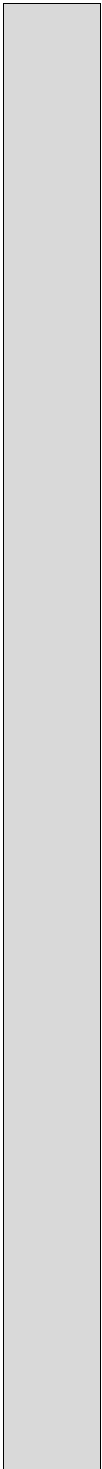
**PREAMBLE**  
*The fishing communities of the world are uniting in the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers to uphold their human rights, social justice and culture; affirming the sea as source of all life; and committing themselves to sustain fisheries and aquatic resources for future generations, protect their livelihoods and secure preferential access for small- and medium-scale, artisanal, and traditional fishers, and indigenous peoples, to coastal resources on which they have historically depended.*

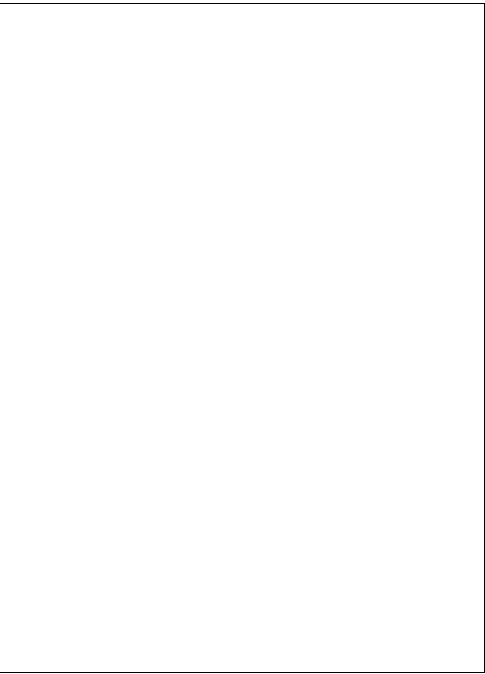
**I. OBJECTIVES**  
The World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers will work to:

1. Protect, defend and strengthen the communities that depend on the fishery for their livelihoods.
2. Assist member organizations to secure and improve the economic viability and quality of life of fish harvesters, fishworkers and their communities.
3. Recognize, protect and enhance the role of women in the fishing economy and in the sustenance of the community.
4. Create an understanding of the resource as a common heritage of humanity and ensure, through sustainable fishing practices, conservation and regeneration of the marine and inland resources and ecosystems, and that it is passed on to future generations.
5. Protect fishing communities, fish resources and fish habitats, such as mangroves, from both land-based and sea-based threats, for example, displacement by tourism, pollu-

tion, including the use of the sea as a dumping ground for toxic waste, destructive industrial aquaculture, overfishing and destructive fishing practices.

6. Establish and promote the rights of fishing communities to their customary territories under their national jurisdiction in the coastal zone for fishing and habitation.
7. Promote a legal regime that will ensure the traditional and customary rights of fishing communities to the fishery under their national jurisdiction.
8. Promote the primary role of fish harvesters and fishworkers organizations in managing fisheries and oceans, nationally and internationally.
9. Promote food security, both locally and worldwide, through sustaining fish stocks for the future, and by reserving fish for human food.
10. Promote equitable representation of fish harvesters' and fishworkers' organizations in all appropriate international and regional fora and advocate for their recognition.
11. Play a monitoring role to ensure compliance by States and transnational corporations with relevant international agreements; oppose any trade agreements that threaten the livelihoods of fishers.
12. Prevent the export of crises of resource collapse and of technologies and practices that lead to these crises.





- 13. Provide support for national and international struggles that are consistent with the objectives of the World Forum.
- 14. Encourage, assist and support fish harvesters and fishworkers to organize where they are not organized.
- 15. Promote the right to social security, safe working conditions, fair income and safety at sea for fish harvesters and fishworkers, including recognition of them as seafarers.
- 16. Improve the communication between fish harvesters and the scientific community through exchange of knowledge and science.
- 17. Acknowledge and enhance the unique culture of fishing communities.

II. MEMBERSHIP

1. Constituencies

- A. Organizations of the following constituencies who adhere to the objectives of the World Forum can be members:
  - i. Fish Harvesters: anyone directly engaged in fishing, known in different countries as:
    - Subsistence fishers

- Artisanal fishers
- Aboriginal or indigenous peoples who are sea-harvesters
- Traditional coastal fisher
- Independent small and medium boat owner-operators who hire their own crew
- Crew members in this sector;
- ii. Crew members in fishing units other than those above, who are presently members of organizations under (i);
- iii. Mass-based organizations women of fishing communities who are engaged in work in support of the fishery; and
- iv. Fishworkers who are engaged activities related to processing, sale (excluding merchants) and transportation of fish.

- B. Large corporations and allied affiliates owning fishing vessels or engaged in harvesting, processing and distribution of fish, and those carrying out destructive industrial aquaculture, *cannot* be members of the Forum.

2. Types of Organizations

- A. Members of the World Forum are organizations such as:
  - i. Trade unions, associations and federations of co-operatives that are democratically constituted.
  - ii. Aboriginal nations dependent upon the fishery for their livelihood.
- B. There should preferably be only one organization per country.
- C. In cases where there are more than one national organization, organizations seeking membership should be representative of a significant proportion of the constituencies listed above.
- D. Exceptions to the above can be made at the discretion of the Interim Co-ordination Committee, in keeping with objectives of the Forum.

III STRUCTURE

Interim Structure

- 1. Organizations present at this meeting as delegates and observers who meet the above criteria, and who wish to become members, will be considered interim members
- 2. The Steering Committee of this Forum will serve as the Interim Co-ordination Committee.
- 3. The Interim Co-ordination Committee will:
  - i. carry out all the regular duties or tasks of a co-ordinating committee of any international organization;
  - ii. facilitate formation of regional councils;
  - iii. accept new interim members based on the above criteria;
  - iv. draft a constitution, including guidelines for certification of voting and non-voting membership; and
  - v. hold a constituent assembly within three years.
- 4. The Interim Committee shall have a co-ordinator elected by this General Assembly.

Proposed Future Structure of the World Forum

- 1. All member organizations will constitute the General Assembly of the World Forum.
- 2. A Co-ordination Committee will be formed through regional representation. This Committee shall be larger than the present Interim Co-ordination Committee.
- 3. Regions / Continents
  - i. There shall be more than one representative from each region or continent
  - ii. This representation shall respect the balance of gender
  - iii. If members of a region so wish, they may create a regional World Forum council for co-ordination

and consultation at the regional level. Membership, however, shall be directly in the World Forum, not in the regional council.

IV FUNDING

- 1. The World Forum self-financing shall be self financing
- 2. Member organizations shall pay membership dues. Those member organizations desirous of making special additional contributions may do so.
- 3. The Forum shall accept only those contributions that are consistent with its objectives.

3

This Charter was adopted at the meeting of the World Forum of Fish Harvesters and Fishworkers, held between 16 and 22 November 1997 at New Delhi, India

## Aquaculture

# Tanzania, go easy

**The following is an urgent public plea to the Tanzanian government to reject the Rufiji prawn project**

I understand that there is currently a public hearing being undertaken concerning a gigantic proposed prawn or shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*) aquaculture project in the Rufiji delta area.

I take the liberty of putting forward my views unsolicited because I feel that this is such a crucial issue of far-reaching implications.

Prawn farming has been carried out traditionally in Asia for hundreds of years. The technology has been simple, non-intensive and ecologically benign. The farm sizes have been small and manageable for rural families or small local businesses. There are indeed possibilities for developing this sustainability in order to benefit local communities and the national economy.

However, the international prawn farming business has boomed in eastern Asia explosively and unsustainably, with large-scale farms of high intensity especially during the last 10 years—but with enormous social and ecological problems:

- the benefits have been short-term and have accrued to a few 'get-rich-quick' opportunists;
- the negative impacts have damaged the long-term interests of local communities;
- corruption and swindle, land grabbing and coercion have become rampant;
- enormous areas of mangroves have been destroyed and natural productivity has fallen;

- huge areas of agricultural land and groundwater have been rendered salty;
- large quantities of fish have taken from the market, affecting poor people;
- massive amounts of prawn and faecal wastes have caused eutrophication;
- prawn diseases have been rampant, causing major collapses in production;
- toxic chemicals and antibiotics have polluted surrounding are;
- after a few years, polluted and diseased sites are abandoned and the foreign 'get-rich-quick' opportunists move on to new areas.

Prawn farming production collapsed in Taiwan (the then No. 1 producer) in 1989, mainly due to virus and bacteria diseases and then in China (the next No. 1 producer), it collapsed in 1993 due to toxic algal blooms. Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and Vietnam are now facing disease problems. All major producers have been plagued by diseases and a fall in production in recent years. And now they are all looking for new, hitherto unpolluted areas, and claiming to be 'environmentally friendly', while employing highly paid consultants, of course.

### South Asian experience

India and Bangladesh have recently been invaded by East Asian prawn farmers. The Supreme Court of India decided to ban prawn farming in 1996 because of all the negative social and ecological impacts.

There is presently much debate and conflict in Bangladesh over this, and ecological destruction and diseases are already rampant there.

The next coastline targeted for unsustainable prawn farming invasion must be East Africa. I understand that the proposal for a project in Rufiji is very large-scale (over 10,000 hectares) and that the investors are mostly foreign. This is absurdly over-dimensioned—the biggest in the world! It is the opposite of a precautionary approach. I am not at all in favour of this.

It would be much wiser to try small-scale, low-intensity prawn farming with local control and initiative, developing it gradually and in a planned manner. There exist serious institutions willing to help in such developments. Tanzania should learn from the lessons of Asia.

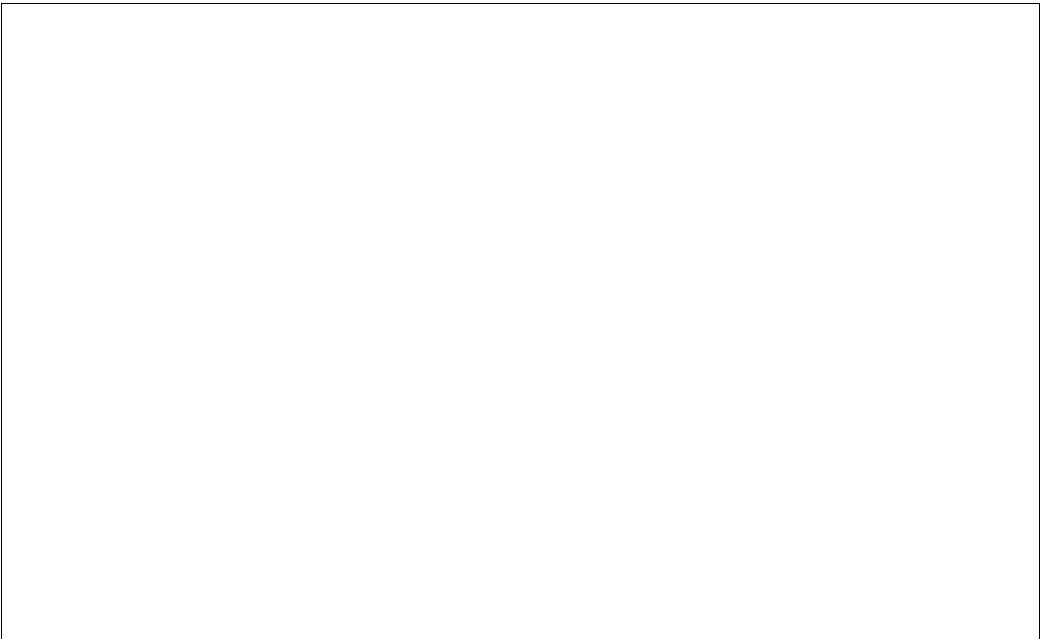
The Rufiji delta is an enormous treasure for local communities and for Tanzania as a whole. It is the home of many people with rich traditions and cultural heritage.

It is a source of mangrove poles and wood (which can be harvested sustainably); it is a nursery and fishing ground for important fish and prawn resources; it is an important rice-growing area; and it is a barrier against erosion by the sea. It contains an important conservation area of forest reserve with biodiversity resources (the late Mr Lubango was dedicated to this). The Rufiji delta should

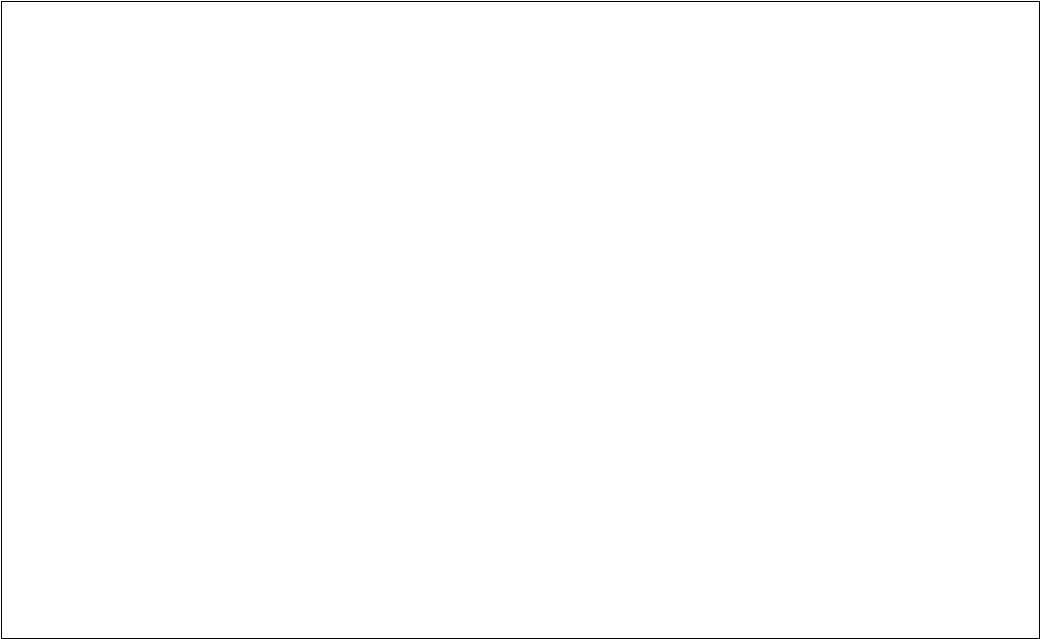
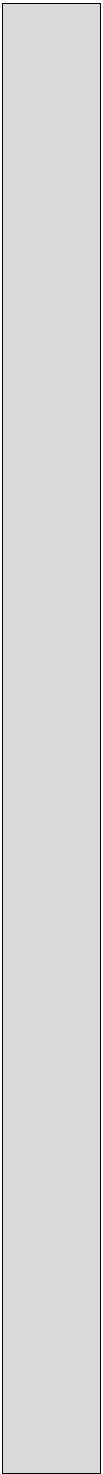
be managed very wisely and cautiously, with full local participation.

Being a Tanzanian marine biologist myself, and having been concerned about ecological and social issues related to coastal areas for many years, with some personal experience and observations on prawn farming, I wanted to take this opportunity to express these views on this important question for Tanzania's development. I feel somewhat qualified to do so because of:


- knowing the Tanzanian coast fairly well (having lived by the coast from the age of nine, and having worked as a marine biologist at the University of Dar es Salaam for 10 years (1972-1982) and having visited the coast every year since then, including several visits to Rufiji, the most recent being in January this year);
- having direct experience, being briefly involved in attempts to develop a smaller prawn farm in Tanzania 10 years ago with local involvement (when the outlook was more optimistic, before diseases struck), and having learned what can go wrong when unsuitable partners get involved; and
- being familiar with some of the relevant issues which have arisen in international prawn farming: I







teach a post-graduate course on international aquaculture at the University of Bergen (as Adjunct Professor) and work on coastal issues from the Agricultural University of Norway (as Researcher with Professor competence).

Honourable Minister, I humbly request you to consider these views and to reject the giant prawn farm proposal in the Rufiji. In case you would like me to substantiate or to elaborate any of these points, I would be glad to do so. 

This public plea faxed on 18 July 1997 to the Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania, was written by Ian Bryceson, Professor at the Centre for International Environment and Development Studies, NLH (Agricultural University of Norway)

# Net worth

**An Internet and e-mail workshop held by ICSF in Lima, Peru, between 27 and 29 May 1997, generated tremendous enthusiasm**

The Workshop on Electronic Communication and Internet was held in Lima, Peru, from 27 to 29 May 1997 at the Catholic University of Lima. About 20 participants from FIUPAP, Peru; CONAPACH and FETRINECH, Chile; FENACOPEC, Ecuador; Sindicato de Obreros Maritimos Unificados, Argentina; and Instituto Terramar and Centro Josue de Castro, Brazil, took part in the workshop.

James Smith was the co-ordinator of the workshop, and Satish Babu from the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies, India, was the principal resource person.

The original idea for conducting the workshop arose at ICSF's Cebu conference in June 1994 and came from the *Latin American fish workers' organizations*. The idea fitted in with ICSF's communications programme and aimed to:

- set up a bulletin board service (BBS) to improve communications between fishworkers' organizations and NGOs;
- facilitate discussion forums (on fisheries agreements, fishing technologies, fisheries legislation, fleet movements, status of stocks, struggles of fishworkers, reports on workshops and consultations, organizational strategies, regional networks, etc.);
- provide information on ICSF programmes and on fishworkers' organizations in the South (in English, French and Spanish); and
- set up a central repository of information on fisheries and fishworkers' issues.

The objectives of the Lima workshop were to:

- familiarize fishworkers' organizations and supporting NGOs in Latin America with the basic electronic communications technologies required for promoting better information access and worldwide exchanges;
- launch a networking operation using electronic communication in order to facilitate interaction between fishworkers' organizations and NGOs, and to help the latter participate more fully in ICSF programmes; and
- help ICSF familiarize itself with current fisheries issues in Latin America.

The workshop was held in collaboration with the Huayuna Institute which, among other things, works with the artisanal fishermen at the community level in Pisco, Peru. Their co-operation was invaluable in the success of the workshop. Hernan Peralta presented a paper on the scope of networking among the Latin American fishworker organizations, and Sebastian Mathew made a presentation on NGOs and the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.

**More networking**

The workshop identified three main areas for greater networking at the regional level: degradation of the coastal environment, including the destructive impact of sea lions on artisanal fishing, incursion of foreign fishing fleets into the EEZs, and aspects of safety at sea. At the end of the workshop, a committee, comprising Sammy Nafez from Centro Josue de Castro, Brazil, Manuel Milla from



FIUPAP, Peru, Pedro Avendano from CONAPACH, Chile, Guillermo Risco from FETRINECH and Geraldo Salazar from FENACOPEC, Ecuador, was formed to discuss follow-up programmes under the co-ordination of James Smith.

**O**n the first day of the workshop, a meeting was held to discuss the areas of networking in Latin America. The discussion was begun by the Secretary General of FIUPAP. He spoke about the membership structure of FIUPAP which comprises marine, riverine and lake fishers. The absence of any social security system in Peru for fishermen was mentioned. Pollution of the coastal waters and destruction of nets and fish by sea lions are major issues of concern, according to the Secretary General. The organization is concerned about the introduction of a permit system and wants open-access regimes for artisanal fishermen. It is further concerned about marketing problems and is interested in using the services of professionals like engineers and economists. It is also lobbying the government for hospitals and schools in fishing communities.

Guillermo Risco of FETRINECH, Chile, wanted fishers to be trained in resource management. He cautioned against the deepening of social inequality in Chile which, in some cases, has led to a loss of faith in the union movement. When democracy came to Chile, fishers expected a lot from the union movement, and disillusionment with the unions has now set in. The main problem in Chilean waters is the lack of an effective monitoring, control and surveillance mechanism to prevent indiscriminate fishing by foreign vessels. Internet networking can contribute to a greater dialogue between the artisanal and industrial unions, which could further contribute to greater solidarity between them.

The conditions of work of industrial fishworkers has worsened in the recent past, said Risco. Fishermen are expected to put in 18 hours of work a day. Although the retirement age in fisheries is 65, there is no single crew member in Chile who is above 50. In most cases, the crew member is burnt out by 40 or 45. Risco lamented the fact that everything is focused mainly on

issues of production. He said fishers have to do something together to defend their national heritage and, towards this end, he said, it is important to exchange experiences. In this context, he found the idea of e-mail networking quite useful.

The conditions in Peruvian industrial fisheries have deteriorated in the 1990s, said Hernan Peralta. Wages have been cut by 25 per cent and industrial fishers are now demoralised. Compared to the Peruvian fishworkers in the industrial sector, the Chileans have much better conditions of work because of better legislation, said Peralta.

Humberto Mella from CONAPACH was concerned that fishers no longer necessarily have a say in fisheries policies in Chile. The decisions are made in big fish importing countries like Japan. Globalization has complicated matters and, therefore, it is necessary to have the involvement of professionals to run fishers' organizations. Fishers can not manage things by themselves anymore. Mella, however, wanted mutual understanding between fishers' organizations and professionals.

Mella sympathized with the Peruvian fishworkers and mentioned the threat Chileans face from sea lions. He wanted technical studies to document the damages caused by sea lions to artisanal fisheries.

Although expressing his happiness at the invitation extended to industrial fishers from Chile to this workshop, Mella did not agree that their conditions are all that bad, as made out by Risco. In Chile, the industrial fishers are entitled to pensions and they also participate in artisanal fisheries on retirement. While the artisanal fishers fish for survival, the industrial fishers fish for money, he said. He was not for any collaborative arrangement between the artisanal and industrial fishers.

#### **Regional arrangements**

He believed regional arrangements for artisanal fishers could work. He was keen on having an association of artisanal fishers at the Latin American level. He wanted to guarantee the future of fishers and warned that time is running out. He

was critical about the government and said that its interest in the sector is limited by what it can get in return.

**M**ella touched upon the five-mile limit issue in Chile, which is a bone of contention between the artisanal and industrial fishers (industrial fishers are putting pressure on the government to permit them to fish within five miles from the coastline). He thinks the government policy basically benefits the industrial sector.

Given a chance, he feared, industrial fishers can overexploit all marine resources. The government, he said, should take a look at what is happening beyond five miles and keep industrial fisheries away from the shore. The distribution of marine resources, in any case, is unequal and favours only the industrial sector, he concluded,

Freddy Villon of FENACOPEC expressed surprise that the minimum size of the Chilean artisanal fleet is 50 GRT. In Ecuador, he said, artisanal vessels are 6 m in length, with or without OBMs. Currently, the artisanal fishing zone is four miles beyond the one-mile ecological zone from the shoreline.

The main struggle of artisanal fishers is to get it extended to eight miles. They are expecting to get a positive response from the government this year. Villon also supported the need for training of fishers in resource management.

In reply to Villon, Mella said large vessels are used mainly in waters south of Valparaiso, Chile, and they are used mainly because the sea conditions are very rough, whereas, in areas north of Valparaiso, the sea is not that rough and the average size of boats is less than 10 m in length. The frequency of accidents is very high in the Chilean artisanal fisheries (on the whole, there are 16,000 vessels in the artisanal sector in Chile), and about 100 deaths occur each year, mainly involving smaller boats.

Jorge Suarez of the Sindicato de Obreros Maritimos Unificados, Argentina was critical of the government and spoke about the Argentinean system where the workers deal directly with the *patronis*

(owners of fishing units). He said there is not much artisanal fishing in Argentina.

The workers are well looked after in Argentina, according to Suarez. They are also paid during off-seasons and are entitled to holidays. He said a regional organization will be of greater benefit if the intention is to function as a Latin American block. To a query on the impact of European Union fisheries agreement with Argentina, he replied that while the workers were opposed to the agreement, the *patronis* were in favour of signing it. The workers feel differently now, since foreign fishing has not adversely affected them.

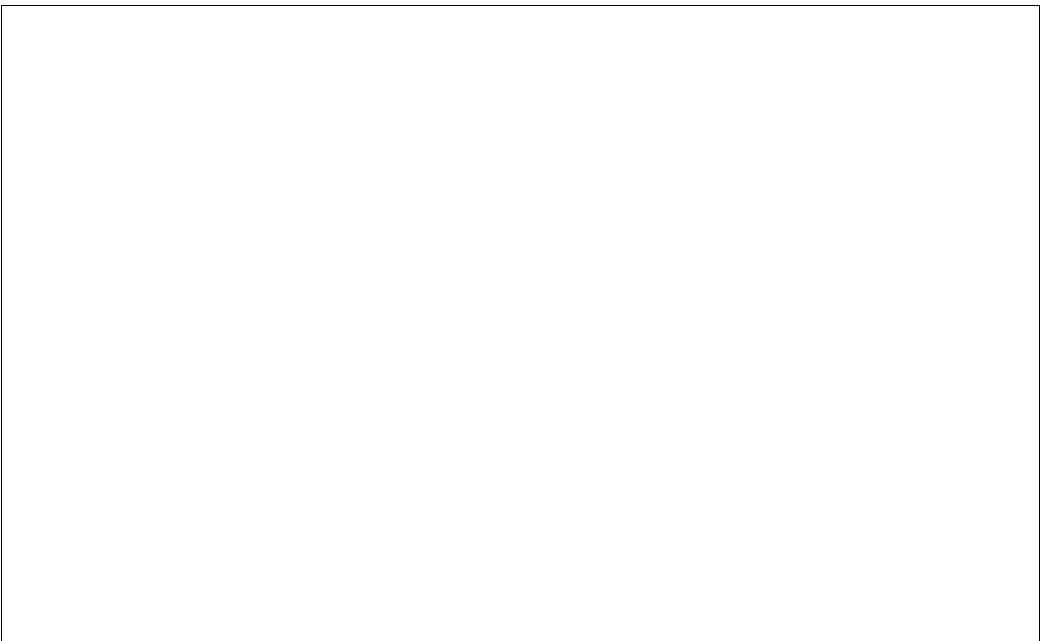
As apparent at the evaluation meeting, the participants were positive about the outcome of the workshop and saw it as the beginning of professionalizing organizational management. They think the use of e-mail and the Internet would give them greater access to information which they consider will be useful to exert international pressure on fisheries issues. However, they felt that the duration of the workshop was too short.

In the discussion on the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the Latin American fishers' organizations seemed to understand the importance of policymaking and the significance of influencing such processes. It was observed that FAO-NGO collaboration was necessary to reinforce national commitments to various international processes.

The Chilean fishworker organizations felt that the implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Agreement on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks will be useful to prevent foreign fishing in their waters by the Koreans, Chinese and the Japanese. However, they do not see any enthusiasm on the part of their governments to ratify the Agreement.

#### Guidelines

The Code, they felt, could provide guidelines to national governments to prepare legislation. Fishers were keen to know why the Code was voluntary and how many countries participated in the development of the Code. There were



apprehensions about the absence of political will to implement fishing legislation.

**T**hey wanted to know if there are mechanisms to ensure greater compliance with legislation. It was ironic, one participant said that Japan has reasonably good legislation to protect its national waters, while their own vessels are illegally fishing in the EEZs of other countries. It was further observed that several countries have double standards when it comes to fisheries. The fishermen were also concerned that sufficient emphasis is not given to collection of data and timely publication of fisheries statistics.

The fishers' organizations observed that they should put pressure on their national governments to adopt the Code. They considered the Code to be of greater benefit to the fishworkers. They also wanted pressure to be exerted on the Latin American governments. The Latin American States, they said, are sensitive about their international image and if there is sufficient pressure from outside, the national governments will adopt the Code and ratify the UN Straddling Stocks Agreement. They wanted ICSF to persuade FAO to be more vigilant about the follow-up to the Code, and to influence national governments to ratify the UN Straddling Stocks Agreement.

The government policies have not changed a bit, said one participant, citing

the Peruvian example. The government has abandoned its fleet restructuring programmes and is apparently encouraging new and more powerful boats. The vessels that were removed under the programme are even illegally fishing in Peruvian waters. Liberal economic policies are influencing the decisions of the governments, said a fisherman.

**Environmental regulations**

Some participants also drew attention to the problems posed by environmental regulations in relation to sea lions, turtles and dolphins. They demanded some realistic application of these regulations, taking into consideration their life and livelihood interests.

This report was written by Satish Babu of the South Indian Federation of Fishermen Societies (SIFFS) India

SAMUDRA publications

## For sale

**ICSF has recently published a set of useful reports and documents on women in fisheries, and coastal area management**

### WOMEN IN FISHERIES SERIES

**Public Hearing on the Struggles of Women Workers in the Fish Processing Industry in India (Women in Fisheries Series No. 1), 50 pp. US\$ 10+postage.**

This dossier puts together documents relating to a unique Public Hearing, held at Cochin, India, in June 1995, on the problems faced by migrant women workers in India's fish processing industry. Apart from a comprehensive report on the conditions of migrant women processing workers employed by the seafood processing industry, this dossier includes transcripts of oral testimonies of some of the women workers, and the verdict of the jury.

**Women First: Report of the Women in Fisheries Programme of the ICSF in India, Volume I (Women in Fisheries Series No. 2), 120 pp. US\$ 20+postage.**

Women of fishing communities in India have always been involved in fishery-related activities. However, little data or *information* exists about their role in fisheries. Their work remains largely invisible, especially to policymakers. The first part of this dossier contains details of women's involvement in fisheries in each of the nine maritime States of India. It travels through the diverse ecological zones and different fisheries along mainland India's 6,000 km coastline, and provides information on the various niches women occupy in the fisheries. The articles in the second part offer a more analytical understanding of the problems of women in fishing communities and their efforts at organizing.

**Women for Sustainable Fisheries: Report of the First Phase of the Women**

**in Fisheries Programme of ICSF (Women in Fisheries Series No. 3), 69 pp, US\$ 15+postage.**

The Women in Fisheries Programme of ICSF, initiated in 1992-93, aims at strengthening the participation of women 'in fishworkers' organizations and in decision making at various levels. This dossier, on the first phase of the programme, draws on the experiences of seven countries, of both the North and the South, to arrive at a greater understanding of gender relations in fisheries. It suggests alternative development strategies for sustainable fisheries, from a feminist perspective.

**Globalization, Gender and Fisheries: Report of the Senegal Workshop on Gender Perspectives in Fisheries (Women in Fisheries Series No. 4), 54 pp, US\$ 10+postage.**

This dossier contains the report of the workshop on gender perspectives in fisheries organized by ICSF in Rufisque, Senegal, in June 1996, in which 33 participants from 12 countries participated. Based on the workshop, this dossier tries to develop a global analysis of the fisheries crisis and its impact on gender relations within coastal communities. Also discussed are the responses of women of fishing communities to the crisis.

### CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

**South Asia Workshop and Symposium on Fisheries and Coastal Area Management: Proceedings, 143 pp. US\$ 25+postage**

For fishworkers, the degradation of coastal areas and habitats, vital for fishery resources, is a matter of great concern.

This publication reports on the proceedings of the South Asia Workshop and Symposium on Fisheries and Coastal Area Management, which brought together 42 participants, including representatives of fishworker organizations, NGOs and policymakers, from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India and Maldives. The workshop emphasized the need for an inter-sectoral approach to coastal area management.

**Coastal Area Management in South Asia: A Comparative Perspective, by Chandrika Sharma, 34 pp (free with the above publication)**

This background paper was prepared for the South Asia Workshop and Symposium on Fisheries and Coastal Area Management- Among other things, it explores threats to the coastal environment in South Asian countries. It discusses coastal area management initiatives in this region, from the perspective of the fishery sector. Also dealt with is legislation of direct relevance to coastal area management.

**How to order:**

For orders below US\$ 100, payment should be sent through a banknote in favour of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers. Bank details are as follows:

Account No: CIAPA-ICSF 310-067 4809-66  
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8-1000 Brussels  
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Margarita and Ka Onie

# Farewell

**In the deaths of Margarita Lizarraga and Sofranjo Balagtas, small-scale and artisanal fishermen have lost two dedicated friends**

**I**t was in June 1994 that we met Margarita Lizarraga for the first time. She was sent by the Assistant Director General of Fisheries of FAO to take part in the ICSF Conference *Struggle of Fishworkers: New Concerns for Support*, which was held to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Rome Conference.

Her mission was to brief fishworker organizations about FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and to seek their participation in the formulation process of the Code. She could convince the participants about FAO's intention to make the formulation of the Code as transparent a process as possible.

Margarita's visit marked an important watershed in the relation of FAO with the artisanal and small-scale fishworker organizations. For the first time, their support was formally sought for an FAO process. The sincerity with which Margarita approached her mission was widely appreciated, and this made ICSF decide to associate seriously with the process. Not only did ICSF associate with the process, it also took along fishworker organizations from countries like the Philippines, Chile and India on its delegation to the Code formulation consultation.

To our surprise, we found the approach of FAO's Fisheries Department to NGO participation in the Code process very positive. NGOs could make written submissions and interventions,

irrespective of their official status with FAO. This was in marked contrast to its approach to NGO participation during the 1984 FAO World Conference on Fisheries Management and Development. The comments of NGOs on various articles of the Code were circulated among the delegates, and several of their points were incorporated into the Code.

Margarita, who was the Secretary of the Code sessions, became the nodal point for relations with the NGOs. ICSF was quite impressed with her commitment to the Code. So committed was she to the Code process that we used to refer to her as the 'Mother of the Code'.

The most crucial impetus to the Code process came from the Mexican government through the Conference on Responsible Fishing that it organized before the Earth Summit, in Cancun, in May 1992, where the concept of responsible defined for fisheries was the first time.

The Cancun Declaration called on FAO to draft an international Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing. Margarita played an important role in the Mexican initiative and her joining the FAO indeed gave a fillip to the whole process.

Perhaps the last international meeting that Margarita attended before she fell ill was the South Asian Workshop and Symposium on Fisheries and Coastal Area Management, organized by ICSF in Chennai in September-October 1996. She inaugurated the Symposium and gave the

keynote address. Once again, she spoke about the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and asked for the participation of fishworker organizations in its implementation.

It is indeed surprising how much difference a single person with a truly human touch and a missionary zeal can make to a process, especially when that process is plagued by all kinds of differences and uncertainties because of the historical conflicts between coastal States and distant-water fishing nations.

Margarita's principal contribution to the Code process was essentially in providing this human touch. Margarita was an ardent supporter of the artisanal and small-scale sector, and always had the Interests of developing countries at heart. She played an active role in various Mexican delegations, as the spokesperson for the Group of 77.

Before joining the FAO, as a member of the Mexican delegation to FAO, she was known for her sympathies for the artisanal and small-scale fisheries sector.

The sad and sudden demise of Margarita is certainly a great misfortune. We share with her family and colleagues a deep sense of loss.



A diminutive man, Sofranio Balagtas was affectionately called Ka One. He was an active fisherman who rose from the most humble background to challenge the might of the State. In the early 1980s, when the country was reeling under the martial law regime of President Ferdinand Marcos, Ka Onie spearheaded a heroic struggle against the privatization of Laguna de Bay, the largest brackish water lagoon in the Philippines, for the culture of milkfish. In the struggle, many fishermen were killed.

Ka Onie went to Rome in 1984 for the historic International Conference of

Fishworkers and their Supporters. At that time, the Philippines had no national fishworker organizations, and Ka Onie was only familiar with Laguna de Bay.

He took the initiative to bring together several provincial fishworkers' associations at the national level and was the leading light behind the formation of BIGKIS-LAKAS Pilipinas. By the time the tenth anniversary of the Rome conference was celebrated in Cebu, BIGKIS-LAKAS Pilipinas was already a force to reckon with.

Once hunted down by the Marcos regime, this simple fisherman went on to become the fisheries adviser to President Ramos of the Philippines. Ka Onie was highly respected for his ideas and for his integrity. Representing the artisanal and small-scale fishworkers of the Philippines, he also participated in one of the sessions of the FAO's Code of Conduct consultations.

In Ka Onie's passing, the fishworkers' movement has lost a true comrade. We join BIGKIS-LAKAS Pilipinas and CALARIZ in sharing our condolences with the bereaving family.

Both Margarita and Ka Onie were highly motivated individuals, whose work tremendously improved the lot of artisanal and small-scale fishing communities in different parts of the world. One worked from 'above', the other worked from 'below'. Both worked selflessly. They have left us more than mere memories.

This obituary notice was written by Sebastian Mathew, Executive Secretary, ICSF

# News Round-up

## Grim shrimps

In early November, 16 international scientists met in Sydney, Australia, to pool their knowledge of shrimp viral diseases and to advance research for diagnosis and prevention of these diseases. Meanwhile, the Environmental Defence Fund (EDF) of the US had released a new 200-page report entitled, 'Murky Waters: Environmental effects of Aquaculture in the United States' [<http://www.edf.org/pubs/Reports/Aquaculture/>].

This report details alleged environmental degradation caused by aquaculture and discusses strategies and technologies available to address these concerns.

## Hot Chile

According to economists from the Georgia State University and the University of South Florida, imports of fresh Atlantic salmon to the US from **Chile** directly support around 6,054 full-time US jobs and add almost \$110 million to the US economy. Indirectly, they contribute an additional 1,572 full-time jobs and another \$66 million income. Almost 93 per cent of imported Chilean salmon passes through the port of Miami, Florida. In November, the US Department of Commerce said that there was not enough

evidence to support the levy of additional duties on imports of Chilean farmed salmon.

## Start conserving

The Fisheries Council of the **European Union** has agreed on new regulations to better protect juvenile fish. From 1 January 2000, the new regulations will require improved selectivity of fishing gear to reduce by-catch. They will also call for control measures to reduce fish discards, limit certain gear in areas where juvenile fish are abundant, and set minimum sizes for fish that may be caught or sold.

## Held up

The trawler *Chernyayev*, from **Russia**, was released in November after its owner coughed up a US\$190,000 fine to settle a complaint concerning

illegal fishing in the Bering Sea. The trawler had been held in Kodiak, Alaska, since August 1997.

## Arm in arm

Officials in **Japan** and **China** have signed a bilateral agreement on fisheries, which

establishes a jointly controlled zone in the East China Sea and agrees to discuss disputed area at a later time before delineating 200-mile economic zones. Fishing quotas will be mutually set, while enforcement authority will be exercised by the nation in whose waters the alleged violations occur.

But officials in **Taiwan** have expressed concern over this agreement. They feel it could exclude consideration of Taiwanese claims to certain areas.

## Breaking the ice

Also agreeing to co-operate on fisheries are **Russia** and **Iceland** who have reached an agreement which provides a framework for negotiating reciprocal fishing rights in each other's waters, as well as purchase or lease of Russian Barents Sea fishing quotas by Icelandic fishermen.

The agreement encourages co-operation and establishment of international companies and projects.

## Tribal loss

The US Supreme Court has refused to consider an appeal by the Lower Brule Sioux Tribe challenging State regulation of fishing by non-Indians and non-tribal members on private property and a narrow strip of Federal land along the Missouri

River, on Indian reservations in South

Dakota. However, the Lower Brule and Cheyenne River Sioux have negotiated agreements with the Corps of Engineers allowing the tribes to regulate fishing on Corps land along the Missouri River on their reservations.

## Stop drifting

The Agriculture and Fisheries Ministry of **Italy** has announced the start of a voluntary reconversion plan for 3,500 Italian drift-net fishermen and 676 fishing vessels. A total of 400 billion lira in aid and compensation will be available for the programme.

## Polishing a policy

The Asian Development Bank, based in Manila, the **Philippines**, has announced a new fisheries policy, which shifts the past emphasis on increasing production to a new focus on "equity, efficiency and sustainability."

The new policy seeks to encourage greater private sector involvement in fishery production and processing, while aiming to foster regional co-operation in developing policies for long-term sustainable fishery management.

**Ancestral power**

Five ‘sea gypsies’ (Sama Bajau) from the island of Roti near Timor in **Indonesia** who were detained for illegally fishing in Australian waters earlier in 1997, argued a unique test case in court in **Australia**, claiming that they had an ancestral

right to fish in Australian waters.

Their ancestors had fished in Australian waters for many centuries preceding European settlement, and, thus, they retain the right to continue this traditional fishery, they argued.

**Penalized**

The *Shin Chang 502*, a fishing vessel from **Korea**, was fined US\$100,000 and its catch, worth over US\$18,000 was forfeited, for fishing five times illegally within the US Exclusive Economic Zone near Palmyra and Jarvis Islands earlier in 1997.

**Coral corralled**

A High Court in **Britain** has rejected Greenpeace’s request for a judicial investigation into the legality of granting petroleum exploration licences for waters north of Scotland where the slow-growing cold-water coral *Lophelia pertusa* is found. The

court said that the lawsuit had not been filed in a timely manner.

Greenpeace announced that it would lodge an official complaint with the European Commission that issuing these licences would breach the European Habitats Directive.

**Healthy, for sure**

Caritas Christi, a health care organization affiliated with the Archdiocese of Boston, the US, was awarded a US\$1.9 million federal grant to finance a programme to assist New England commercial fishermen in obtaining health insurance.

The grant funds were provided as part of a federal effort to assist New England fisheries.

Federal funds will supplement State funding for this programme.

**Cyanide fishing**

The World Resources Institute has released a new report, entitled Sullied Seas" Strategies for Combating Cyanide Fishing in Southeast Asia and Beyond, which documents efforts to launch a Cyanide Fishing Reform Programme by the **Philippines** government.

**Mexicoil**

Blue Tide, the Mexican Centre for Environmental Law, and Greenpeace of **Mexico** have jointly announced that they have filed a lawsuit against the government

oil monopoly, Petroleos Mexicanos, for pollution damages to mangrove swamp and estuary at Laguna del Pom, off Campeche sound.

The damages have arisen from petroleum

exploration and development. Claim these two groups.

They are also seeking to halt construction of a nitrogen compressing plant in Cuidad del Carmen that would inject gas underground to increase petroleum production.

**FAO meet**

Between 8 and 11 December 1997, the FAO held a technical consultation on policies for sustainable shrimp culture. Conducted at FAO’s regional office in Bangkok, **Thailand**, the consultation was attended by government delegations from important shrimp producing and consuming countries of the Asian and American regions, and observers from several multilateral and inter-governmental agencies as well as important international NGOs representing industry, environment and rural development.

The consultation produced a consensus that sustainable shrimp culture is a desirable and achievable goal. But reaching it will depend on effective government

policy and regulatory actions as well as the co-operation of industry in utilizing sound technology in its planning, development and operations.

**Hell Nino**

Officials in **Peru**, encouraged by a growing abundance of anchovy, have announced the lifting of a ban on anchovy fishing, in effect since March 1997 due to El Niño conditions.

Meanwhile, US Fish and Wildlife Service scientists reported that hundreds of thousands of Alaska seabirds (primarily short-tailed shearwaters, black-legged kittiwakes and murre) from the Gulf of Alaska to the Chukchi Sea, died this summer., possibly from

starvation due to the effects of El Niño on the marine ecosystem.

**Soft TEDS**

The Marine Fisheries Commission of Florida. US has proposed new regulation which requires Florida shrimpers to employ either of two federally certified turtle excluder devices (TEDS) to reduce by-catch of fish in shrimp trawls by half.

Some shrimpers contested this proposed rule, believing that other ‘soft’ TEDS are more effective.

*Her hand cut a trail in the sea, as her mind made the green swirls and streaks into patterns and, numbed and shrouded, wandered in imagination in that underworld of waters where the pearls stuck in clusters to white sprays, where in the green light a change came over one's entire mind and one's body shone half transparent enveloped in a green cloak.*

—from **To the Lighthouse** by Virginia Woolf





ICSF is an international NGO working on issues that concern fishworkers the world over. It is in status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN and is on ILO's Special List of Non-Governmental International Organizations. It also has Liaison Status with FAO. Registered in Geneva, ICSF has offices in Chennai, India and Brussels, Belgium. As a global network of community organizers, teachers, technicians, researchers and scientists, ICSF's activities encompass monitoring and research, exchange and training, campaigns and action, as well as communications. SAMUDRA REPORT invites contributions and responses. Correspondence should be addressed to the Chennai office.

The opinions and positions expressed in the articles are those of the authors concerned and do not necessarily represent the official views of ICSF.

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